Concept of Sarasvatī

(In Vedic Literature)

Dr. Raghunath Airi

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FOREWARD

Sarasvatī is one of the very few Vedic deities, who has come down from hoary antiquity to modern times, fully retaining her universal appeal to all and worshipped by the intellectual, Hindu, Jain and Buddhist, though under different names. While some of the mighty deities of the Vedic pantheon receded to the back-ground, were reduced to insignificant status or gradually disappeared altogether from the Hindu pantheon giving place to new ones, the Goddess Sarasvatī of the Ṛgveda has gradually risen to prominence and has become, in due course, the full-fledged goddess of learning and wisdom of the whole of Bhārata-Varṣa. In the Ṛgveda Sarasvatī unfolds her two fold nature as river and as deity and has been distinctly and clearly described, though briefly. With the disappearance of the mighty river Sarasvatī, graphically described in the ṚV and termed as *nadītamā*, 'the mightiest among the rivers', and as *sindhumātā*, 'the mother of all rivers'in the deserts of north-western India, she as a river has almost lost her Vedic identity and has become a river of Vedic myth. The river Sarasvatī was indeed an Indo-Iranian river with her analogue Anāhitā, found described in the Zend Avesta. But Sarasvatī as the deity of wisdom and eloquence came down through the ages, inspiring the people of intellectual pursuits (*cetantī sumatīnām*, ṚV 1, 3,11) and directing her devotees to the path of light and wisdom by unfolding the inexhaustible treasure of knowledge (*pracetayati ketunā*, ṚV 1, 3, 12)

In the present book which formed the doctoral dissertation accepted by the Kurukshetra University, Dr. Raghunath Airi has exhaustively dealt with the concept of Sarasvatī in ancient Indian literature, comprising the Vedas, the epics and the Purāṇas. Such aspects of goddess Sarasvatī, as her gradual evolution and development, and her relation with other deities, as also the anthropomorphism and inconography relating to her have received full treatment in this thesis.

Dr. Airi has, however, left out, for obvious reason, the knotty problem, often discussed by the Vedists and historians, regarding the identification of the Vedic Sarasvatī and has confined himself to the divine aspect of Sarasvatī. However it is evident beyond a shadow of doubt that the Ṛgvedic Sarasvatī coming down from the height of the Himalayas and flowing through the plain of North-Western India did reach, in her course, the Arabian sea. Therefore it is likely that the mighty river Sarasvatī of the ṚV might have changed her course from west to east after a series of catastrophic earth-quakes that devastated this sensitive region of Himalayan range. This must have happened in post Ṛgvedic period. What is known as the river Brahamputra today might be no other than the Vedic Sarasvatī but with changed course from the west to the east.

It may be noted in this connection that the river Bramhaputra was known as the Brahmasuta in the Purāṇas, which is a synonym for Sarasvatī.

ABBREVIATIONS

I—The Vedic Saṁhitās

AV.	=	Atharvaveda Saṁhitā
Kap. S.	=	Kapiṣṭhalakaṭha Saṁhitā
Kāṭha S.	=	Kāṭhaka Saṁhitā
Mait. S.	=	Maitrāyanī Saṁhitā
ṚV.	=	Ṛgveda Saṁhitā
Taitt, S.	=	Taittirīya Saṁhitā
Y V.	=	Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā

II—The Brāhmaṇas And the Āraṇyakas

Ait. Br.	=	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
Go. Br.	=	Gopatha Brāhmaṇa
Jai. Br.	=	Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa
Kau. Br.	=	Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇa
Śāṅ. Br.	=	Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa
Ś. Br.	=	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
Tāṇḍya Br.	=	Tāṇḍya Mahā Brāhmaṇa
Taitt. Br.	=	Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa
Ait. Ār.	=	Aitareya Āraṇyaka
Taitt.Ār Up.	=	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

III—The Kalpa Sūtras

Āp ŚS	=	Āpastamba Śrautasūtra
Kā ŚS	=	Kātyāyana Śrautasūtra
Lāṭ Ś S	=	Lāṭyāyana Śrautasūtra
Śāṅ Ś S	=	Śāṅkhāyana Śrautasūtra
Vai. ŚS	=	Vaikhānasa Śrautasūtra
Vaitāna S	=	Vaitāna sūtra
Āgni G S	=	Āgniveśya Gṛhyasūtra
Drā GS	=	Drāhyāyana Gṛhyasūtra
Go GS	=	Gobhila Gṛhyasūtra
Hi GS	=	Hiraṇyakeśi Gṛhyasūtra
Śāṅ GS	=	Śāṅkhāyana Gṛhyasūtra
Vā GS	=	Vāraha Gṛhyasūtra
Āp DS	=	Āpastambīya Dharmasūtra
Baudha DS	=	Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra
Vi Dha.	=	Viṣṇu Dharmasūtra
SR Up.	=	Sarasvatī Rahasyopaniṣad

Containing, as it does, substantial material on Sarasvatī culled from diverse sources and presented methodically, it is to be hoped that Indologists will warmly welcome this work as constituting a distinct contribution to universal knowledge.

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INTRODUCTION

Devatā is conceived as a manifestation of the Ultimate Reality by an Indian seer. In the presence of the idea of Para Brahman or Parā Śakti, therefore, the significance of a *devatā* does not diminish. The concept of an Indian *devatā* has no correspondence in other religions of the world, inasmuch as a *devatā* can be conceived as identical to the Supreme Being in Indian religion while no angel, 'farista' or 'yazd' can be termed as god, Allah or Ormuzd. Thus the person of an Indian *devatā* cannot be separated from the idea of Absolute Brahman. Sarasvatī amongst numerous deities of Indian Pantheon occupies a prominent place. (She is conceived at present the divine knowledge, a goddess presiding over all branches of learning and those of trade. Her concept as such is the result of a phased development, effected by and by through ages.)

I have attempted here to present a complete and comprehensive picture of the concept of Sarasvatī in the Vedic[1], Epic and Puranic Literature; her representation in sculptures, coins etc. has also been traced in different ages and in different regions. There is a monotonous repetition of material and thought in various Purāṇas, therefore, documentary information has often been supplied from one of such texts in order to avoid the wearisome reproduction of ideas.

I have axed my findings on the river Sarasvatī especially wherever it is not spoken of as a divinity in the texts of the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas in order to delimit the scope of my project. During the course of my research, I have felt many a time that there is a further scope of research on this topic, as to find out the extent of the correspondence of the Aryan/Hindu concept of Sarasvatī in the Buddhist and Jain concepts of the Goddess of Learning. Sarasvatī and Mañjuśrī[2] in the Buddhist Pantheon correspond to our Sarasvatī and Brahmā in many characteristics. And again the concept of Śrutadevī and the Sixteen Vidyādevīs of the Jains[3] is quite near to that of our Sarasvatī. This scope of research can be still widened when we view that the idea of the Goddess of Learning has also travelled overseas through both Hinduism and Buddhism. Carrying the local impact with her person, one can meet Hindu Sarasvatī in Bali[4] and Buddhist Sarasvatī in Japan[5].

All important statements in the work have been fully documented and all conclusions are based on a study of original sources. In the interpretation of certain passages I sometimes differ from the commentators and translators and the reasons for the same have been added in foot notes. References from original texts have often been quoted which resulted in inflating the volume to some extent, but there was hardly any escape from it. A possible vigilance has been kept to avoid repetition but at places where a particular point is viewed afresh from a different angle, its repetition was felt imperative. I express my hearty thanks and gratitude to those generous scholars who very kindly gave their valuable time, esteemed guidance and valuable suggestions to improve the work. I do not deem it fit to free myself from the debt by just mentioning their names and saying a few formal words of thanks in their honour because I owe them much and mere words here will not absolve me of the debt.

I also crave the indulgence of those celebrated scholars whose views, during my search after truth, have been refuted. But this difference of opinion has never lessened my respect for them or their works. To err is human and we are all liable to do so under one illusion or another.

I take this oppotunity to thank Shri P.R. Kaikini, Bombay, Pandit Paras Ram Sharma and Shri Jagdish Chander Sharma of Lok Chetna Printing Press, Rohtak who gave unstinted co-operation to me in bringing out this book.

Caitra Śukla 6, 2034 V. S. *Raghunath Airi*
JHAJJAR (Rohtak).

1. Sāmaveda text has been left out as it sheds no fresh light on the Ṛgvedic concept of the goddess. Information of the Kauśika Sūtra, and Vaitāna Sūtra has been applied to explain the Atharvavedic *mantras.*
2. See Alice Getty, Gods of Northern Buddism, Tokyo, 1962.
3. See J. A. H. R. S. Part 3–4, Vol. XXVIII, 1962–63. 'Śrutadevī' by Dr. V. Yasodadevi. 4. See Sylvain Levi, Sanskrit Texts in Bali, *passim.*
5. See Alice Getty, op. cit. p. 127 ff.

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Vedic Section

Vedic Section

CHAPTER 1

SARASVATĪ IN THE ṚGVEDA

Sarasvatī has been praised and prayed to in the ṚV in about eighty *ṛcs*. She has often been referred to in the prayers to Viśvedevāḥ but she is also a *sūkta-bhāk* deity to whom at least three sūktas are dedicated, to wit, 6,61;7,95;96; however, in one-third of the *mantras* of the last two *sūktas* her consort *Sarasvat* has been glorified. Sarasvatī has been exalted by Vedic worshippers in the popular fashion and style with which all other Vedic gods are lauded. Thus in many qualities she is analogous to others but at the same time her individuality can be well-marked in Vedic prayers and *mantras* sung in her praise. She was conceived in her various aspects by the Vedic seers which we shall see below.

SARASVATĪ—A RIVER-GODDESS

Sarasvatī is, primarily, a river-goddess, though this form of the goddess has not been recognished by scholiasts save Yāska[1]. She is quite an ancient deity because she has an Iranian parallel in the sacred river Haraihvatī. In the Avestic Aban Yasht (5,3), *aredvī, sūrā* and *anāhitā* are the three attributes of Haraihvatī. In our terminology we can say that *ārdhukī*, 'benign' or *ārdrikā*, 'humid' *sūrā*, 'strong or heroic' and *anāsitā*, 'immaculate' are the attributes of Indo-Iranian Sarasvatī, 'rich in waters.' Though the origional Indo-Iranian attributes of Sarasvatī, viz; *ārdrikā* or *ārdhukī (aredvī)*, *śūrā (sūra)* and *anāsitā (anāhitā)* are conspicuous by their absence in the ṚV but their reflection or correspondence is happily preserved in *ṛtāvarī*[2], *vīrapatnī*[3] and *śubhrā*[4], respectively.

1. It is said that Yāska (Nir. 2, 23) has referred to two types of *mantras* relating to Sarasvatī—(i) those which speak of Sarasvatī as a river and (ii) those which speak of Sarasvatī as a goddess. Reading this terse expression of Yāska one is likely to pose a question as to what form of the goddess Sarasvatī has been referred to by Yāska. Does he mean by *devatā*, Sarasvatī, a river goddess, or the goddess of Learning and Intellect or the goddess of

atmospheric region having water as its chief element or the goddess having a composite character with all characteristics of her various forms viz., river-goddess, goddess of Learning and Intellect and goddess of atmospheric region ? It seems that by *devatā* Yāska means here the river goddess because the *mantras* quoted and explained by Yāska to illustrate the personality of the goddess suggest that Yāska has the concept of Sarasvatī as a river goddess before him. Out of the two *mantras* quoted by Yāska, the first (1, 3, 10) referring to Sarasvatī as *pāvakā* (one who purifies) does not speak of any distinct attribute of the goddess. It is, because, the act of purifying is a common characteristic of Vedic deities like Agni (1,160,3 and etc.) the Maruts (7, 56, 2) and the Dawns (4, 51, 3); similarly, her epithet *Vājinīvatī* is primarily a synonym of Uṣas (Nigh.1, 8). The epithet *dhiyāvasu* is also applied to Agni, Indra and Soma (discussed blow). Hence it seems that this *mantra* has been quoted by Yāska in order to emphasise that Sarasvatī is as good as any Vedic deity since she,too, has such characteristics as are common to other Vedic gods. In the second *mantra* (1, 3,12,) of course, the distinct characteristics of Sarasvatī are referred to. Yāska explains that Sarasvatī makes her great flood manifest*(maho arṇaḥ-mahad arṇaḥ pracetayati)* by her action *(ketunā-karmaṇā)* and she reveals clearly *(abhi-vi-rājati viśeṣarūpeṇa dīpayati*, Sāyaṇa) all (branches of) profound knowledge *(sarvāṇi prajñānāni)*—Nir. 11, 27. According to Yāska, therefore, the goddess Sarasvatī along with her riverine character makes manifest the different branches of learning.

After it, Yāska says (11, 27) : Sarasvatī denotes the sense of speech *(vāk)*, she is, therefore, considered as *Mādhyamikā Vāk* by the etymologists. *Mantras* quoted by Yāska (ṚV 8, 100, 10; 11) refer to Vāk in the form of Thunder and Lightning. This observation of Yāska leads us to infer that Sarasvatī was considered by the etymologists to be a goddess of atmospheric region also and in this form she was identical to the goddess Vāk, representing the phenomena of thunder and lightning. Thus it is said generally, by the interpreters of Yāska that the latter too, like Nighaṇṭu took Sarasvatī in two forms — as a river, and as a goddess of atmosphric region holding her sway on the branches of knowledge. However, if we read between the lines of the text of Yāska, we see that he, perhaps, himself conceived Sarasvatī as *nadī-devatā*, 'the river goddess', presiding over different branches of knowledge. By the words written after the explanation of this *mantra*, he says that etymologists take Sarasvatī (i. e., in addition to her *nadī-devatā* concept which is quite popular in the Veda and is alluded to by the *mantra*-1, 3, 12) as a *Mādhyamikā Vāk*. Since the sense of the word 'also' is understood in this sentence and not expressed by the *nipāta* (indeclinable) *'api'*, he is misunderstood by the later scholiasts. Again it may be said that the meaning of the words of Yāska which we understand is not against the spirit of his words *nadīvad devatāvac ca nigamā bhavanti*, in which he refers to two types of *mantras* because the second type of *mantras* pertaining to *devatā* will contain in it the *mantras* pertaining to the goddess Sarasvatī, may she be conceived as a *nadī-devatā* or a *Mādhyamikā Vāk*.

2. 6, 61 9. According to Yāska (2, 25) *ṛta* means water *ṛtāvarī* would thus mean 'humid', 'full of water'.

3. 10, 65, 13. 4. 7, 95, 6.

Is Sarasvatī a Celestial River ?

In her prayers and panegyrics, Sarasvatī, the river-goddess, is thought of as 'carved out as vast by (god) Vibhvan'[1], 'having (celestial) 'ocean as her mother'[2], 'coming down (on earth) from heaven'[3], 'pervading the three regions'[4], 'present in heaven and earth'[5], 'possessed of divinity of higher order amongst the other river-goddesses'[6] and 'for whom Vasiṣṭha has unbarred the two doors of *ṛta*'[7]. Because of the divinity attached to the person of the river goddess, Dr. B. R. Sharma has propounded that Sarasvatī is more of a celestial character than terrestrial'[8] and asserts that Sarasvatī seem to be a 'celestial flood'[9] and not a terrestrial stream. At another place he says that Sarasvatī is but a mythical river.[10]

Though it cannot be improbable that Sarasvatī to begin with, would have been a mere 'celestial flood' for elder Ṛṣis and its reflection was seen afterwards in the mundane Sarasvatī by younger Ṛṣis. Later on, this terrestrial Sarasvatī would have been deified by the younger seers,[11] firstly, because it was thought of by them as a reflection of the 'the celestial flood' and, secondly, for the beneficence and benignity of the river towards them who depended on its water. After her deification the goddess Sarasvatī an apotheosis of the river of that name, would have been regarded as possessed of divine qualities and thought of as exercising her influence in the celestial region also. But this does not mean that when a deity is said as exercising an influence on the celestial sphere, he ceases to be a terrestrial god. It is but natural in the process of glorification that he (the terrestrial god) should be thought of as 'pervading the three worlds' and as 'possessed of celestial links'. Thus the divine qualities of Sarasvatī where in she is regarded as possessed of a celestial character cannot lead us to think that Sarasvatī in the ṚV is but a 'celestial-flood', 'celestial goddess' or a 'mythical-river'.

Dr. B. R. Sharma[12] further adds "her epithet *pañca-jāta vardhayantī* does not prove her terrestrial character in any way". Taking it for granted that the *pañca-jātāḥ* or *pañca-jana* are the celestial beings, as Dr. Sharma thinks, we may add that such an epithet also would fit in quite well in the context of the glorification of Sarasvatī. The worshipper here may mean that river-goddess is one who exercises her influence even on the heavenly people (and not only on the terrestrial folk). Dr. Sharma's other assertions also are of similar nature and thus hold no ground.

Actually in the ṚV the heavenly and the earthly waters are not shut off from each other in water-tight compartments, each class involves the other. The heavenly waters fall in the form of rain and run in the rivers to the sea, while earthly waters owe their origin to the heavenly. Thus, if Sarasvatī, has links with 'celestial water'or'other celestial beings' it cannot mean that she loses her terrestrial character. Many other epithets of Sarasvatī quoted by Dr. Sharma to prove her 'celestial character' and thus to refute her terrestrial character are, in fact, borne by many other terrestrial deties[13].

1. 6, 61, 13. 2. 7, 36, 6.
3. 5. 43, 11. 4. 6, 31, 12.
5. 7. 96, 1. Almost all gods bear such a characteristic. Cf. V.M. p. 15.
6. 7, 96, 1. 7. 7, 95, 6.
8. The Vedic Sarasvatī, Calcutta Review, July, 1949, p. 55.
9. Ibid., p. 56. 10. Ṛgvedic Rivers, Indica, Bombay, 1953, p. 389.
11. These seers would have been coming from the tribes who lived on her banks. They included the Śunahotras (2, 41, 17), the Vasiṣṭhas (7,39, 5—Veṅkaṭamādhava Comm.) the Bharatas to whom Divodāsa and Vadhryaśva belonged (6, 61, 1) and the Purus (7, 96, 2).
12. CR., op. cit. p. 57. 13. Discussed below.

Sarasvatī, the Presiding Deity of the River of that name ?

We do not contribute to the view-point of the scholiasts who hold that it is not the river but the presiding deity of the river of that name who is worshipped by the Vedic sacrificer. That is, they mean by the 'river-goddess Sarasvatī,—Sarasvatī, who presides over the river or 'She of the river Sarasvatī'. The view-point of the scholiasts is based on their assertion that the Vedic seers did not indulge in worship which was fetishistic in character[1]. They thought of the presence of a presiding deity (*adhiṣṭhātṛ devatā*) in inanimate objects like stone, herb and axe (which were actually worshipped by the Vedic sacrificer) in order to give a civilized look to the Vedic religion. But it seems more natural and hence convincing when we take that the Vedic worshipper worshipped and solicited such objects as were associated with the pious ritual. Attaching adoration and magnanimity to the inanimate ingredients or objects used in the ritual is quite credible. It is done even today. When thought of as associated with divinities, these objects would have been also deified by the Vedic worshipper and then the divine qualities would have been super-imposed on them. For their grandeur, beneficence and benignity, many phenomena of nature also would have been

deified by them; as a result of it sun, rivers. wind, forest, etc. were glorified and worshipped. Solicitations made to these objects definitely allude to this fact that they were thought of as containing the qualities of a godhead. Yāska himself seems to be referring to this fact indirectly when he says that the panegyrics are addressed with a particular desire to a deity from whom the worshipper wishes to obtain his desiderata[2]. More explicitly we shall say that the objects or natural phenomena were worshipped and invoked by the Vedic wordshipper because he saw in them the divine element[3]. Thus if the Vedic worshipper worshipped the sun or the moon, the nocturnal starry sky or the bright sky of the day, the fire ablaze on the hearth or on the altar, the flowing waters of clouds or of the rivers, it was because of the fact that he saw in these objects the divine shadow. As such to his mind, they could help and bestow boons and benefits on him who adored them, supplicated them. Thus we understand that it is the very object that is taken to be a godhead by the Vedic-worshipper, and with the gradual process of apotheosis he super-imposes the popular qualities of a godhead on this object and worships it. Therefore, when we talk of the river-goddess Sarasvatī here, we do not mean the presiding deity of river Sarasvatī but we take the Sarasvatī i. e., the river itself as the goddess Sarasvatī[4].

The river Sarasvatī, too, would have been deified for its association with various divinities[5], or being thought of as an earthly form of the celestial flood known as Sarasvatī or being the cradle of the Vedic culture, or being taken as possessed of divine quatilities of providing opulent food and fertility, pelf, progency, etc.—the desiderata of the Vedic worshipper. We shall see hereafter that in post-Ṛgvedic literature, the worship of the river (-goddess) continued without any break. For this reason, too, it is quite pertinent to think that such a worship in the ṚV also might have existed.

1. Yāska's Nir. 1, 15. 2. Nir. 7, 1. Also Cf. Bṛ. Dev. 1,6.
3. Sarasvatī, the river(-goodess) was worshipped in this way. See, e.g., 10, 64, 9.
4. In other words *Nadī-devatā* (river-goodess) is *nadī ca asau devatā* and not *nadyāḥ (adhiṣṭhātṛ) devatā*.
5. Similarly the sacred river Śvetayāvarī was glorified by Viśvamanā (8, 26, 18; 19) because it had its links with the Aśvins.

Waters of the River

The swelling waves of the Sarasvatī have been mentioned once and again in the ṚV. It has broken with its swift current the hilly ridges that fall in its way, those who dig up for lotus stems[1]. Here we notice that the nature of the river in its first stage has been very correctly recorded[2], since the phenomenon of digging and deepending the course has been referred to here. Further more, the description of its swift-moving waters, too, shows that the river is mentioned as flowing in hilly tracts. Its great flood is made manifest by its deeds[3]. The current of the river is limitless (*ananta*), unimpaired (*ahruta*), swift-moving (*tveṣa*), agile (*cariṣṇu*), mighty and goes ahead with a roaring sound[4]. Its flood would have been causing havoc also sometimes. This has been hinted at in an invocation—'With your waters bring prosperity to us, do not make us unthriving, with your water (i. e., flood) do not torment us. Respond to our friendship and obedience. (Uprooted by your flood) may we not go to far-off lands which are barren being devoid of you.'[5] The reason of the swelling bed of Sarasvatī can be well-understood, if we turn to the study of the probable climatic conditions of the land watered by the Sarasvatī. Mr. N. N. Godbole points out in this context that 'the climate must have been fairly cold (not hot as it is now) and the rains must have been very heavy (and not scanty as now).[6] Carrying rainy waters[7] the Sarasvatī would have often run in spate[8], or ever flowed with a swelling bed; it is for this reason that it has been mentioned as one of those streams which swell fully with the volume of their own waters.[9] Or such floods would have been the result of the fact that the Sarasvatī was fed with many tributaries[10] or heavenly rivers, i. e., rain coming down from clusters of clouds.

The waters of the Sarasvatī are life-giving not only because they ward off enemies but also for the reason that they are fertile. Therefore, it is not a hyperbole when it is said that all the food rests in the Sarasvatī, i.e., dependent on it.[11] The Sarasvatī is one of those rivers which are rich in food (*yaśasaḥ*) and which are possessed of copious milk (*su-dughāḥ*, i. e., fertilizing and life-giving waters)[12]. Its epithets *vājinīvatī*[13] and *vājebhir vājinīvatī*[14]. speak of its richness in food which provides vigour, in the form of flora on its banks and crops dependent on its waters.

1. 6, 61, 2.

2. We learn from geomorphology that a river passes through three stages from its source to mouth. In the first stage the river flows through hilly tracts with swift currents and deepens its course. In the second stage it reaches the plains, flows slowly and effects erosion of its banks. In the third stage it forms a delta before reaching its mouth. See W. D. Thronbury, Geomorphology, John Wiley & Sons. INC, New York, 1954, pp. 137-40.
3. 1, 3, 12 : *maho arṇaḥ...pracetayati ketunā*.
4. According to Skandasvāmī its flood is as fierce as a disease *amaḥ rogaḥ tat sadṛśaḥ/Yathā rogo bhayānakaḥ tad vad āgacchati bhayānakaḥ ity-arthaḥ.*
5. 6, 61, 14. Veṅkaṭamādhava's view, that Sarasvatī ran short of water (vide his comm. on this *ṛc* where he explains *payasā mā na ā dhak* as *mā ca asmān dhākṣīḥ udakābhāvāt*, 'do not torment us for want of water) cannot be entertained, because it is against the spirit of the contents of other passages in the ṚV (see, e. g., 6, 52, 6; 7, 36 6 etc.) where the Sarasvatī is spoken of as swelling with its waters, etc.
6. ABORI, Vol, Parts I-IV, p. 16
7. Sarasvatī is said as *sindhumātā*, who has (celestial) sindhu i. e. the cluster of clouds as her mother (7, 36, 6).
8. Dr. Krishnan in his 'Geology of India' (1958), pp. 22-26 points out that the rivers of the Punjab system are known to be very fickle and uncertain in their flow even to-day. They must have been much more so in the olden periods when the monosoon and snowfalls were so changing in the post pleisetocene period.
9. 7, 36, 6
10. 6, 52,6 : *sindhubhiḥ pinvamānā, sindhu* may mean here the celestial river or cluster of clouds as mentioned above. Veṅkaṭamādhava interprets the passage *Sarasvatī sindubhiḥ pinvamānā* as *Sarasvatī ca udakair vahanty-astu*(variant-*mahaty-astu*), which means 'may Sarasvatī flow being full of water'. Veṅkaṭamādhava's interpretation presupposes that Sarasvatī had run short of waters that is why she is prayed to come being swelled by other rivers. But such an interpretation does not seem to be nearer to the spirit of the worshipper who requests Sarasvatī, the one being fed by a number of (celestial) streams, come to him(the worshipper) most often with protection. The theme contained in these lines is perhaps, the same as is contained in 6, 61, 14 *payasā mā na ā dhak*. That is, the devotee requests the river-goddess to visit him for his benefit not bane by her swelling currents.
11. 2, 41, 17.
12. 7, 36, 6.
13. 2, 41, 18.
14. 1, 3, 10.

Sarasvatī—A Goddess of the Aerial Region

When once Sarasvatī was counted by the Nighaṇṭu (5,5) in the list of the aerial deities and later on taken by the Nairuktas as a Mādhayamikā Vāk[1], the later scholiasts interpreted all the *ṛcs* of Sarasvatī in two ways : (i) as a river and (ii) as a goddess of aerial region. They misunderstood the statement of Yāska

'*nadīvad devatāvac ca nigamā, bhavanti* and therefore, explained wrongly even the most simple *ṛcs* pertaining to the river-goddess having taken her as an aerial goddess. In such an enthusiasm of theirs to explain Sarasvatī either as a goddess of aerial region in all *ṛcs* (save six or seven) or as a mere river, we come across some glaring mistakes committed by them. Some of the *ṛcs* held by them as belonging to the river belong really to the river-goddess. Take for example, the *ṛc* '*iyaṁ śuṣmebhir bisakhā*.....,6,61,2. It has been interpreted by the scholiasts, following Yāska, as a *ṛc* pertaining to the river Sarasvatī. But the majesty and grandeur of the river contained in the first half of the *ṛc* and the sincere suppliance expressed in the second half leave no doubt that Sarasvatī is to be taken here as a river-goddess and not as a river. In the Mait. S. (2,5 4) Sarasvatī is treated as a goddess to whom offerings of animal-food are to be made accompanied by the recital of the present *ṛc* and the five *ṛcs* that follow it. Scholiasts,following the Nighaṇṭu (and the Nirukta also because they do not catch the real idea of the words of Yāska) would ever interpret in such contexts the goddess Sarasvatī as a deity of the aerial region, if they accept Sarasvatī here as a goddess[2], though the words—'*taviṣebhir ūrmibhiḥ pārāvataghnīm*'—definitely refer to the character of the goddes. Again we see that 2, 41, 16 is a *ṛc* not pertaing to the river as the scholiasts take. The panegyrical vocatives—*ambitame*[3] *nadītame, devitame*—and the humble imploration of the suppliant who evokes the motherly affection and filial love of the goddess by the vocative, *amba*, for the attainment of an abstract gift of fame (*praśasti*) leave no doubt that the *ṛc* under reference is addressed to the goddess Sarasvatī of riverine nature.

The scholiasts are sometimes themselves confused and cannot decide whether a *ṛc* pertains to the river or to the goddess. Śaunaka takes 2, 41, 16 as a *ṛc* pertaining to the river Sarasvatī at one place (Bṛ. Dev. 2, 137) but elsewhere (Bṛ. Dev. 4, 92) takes it as one of three *ṛcs* (viz., ṚV 2, 41, 16; 17; 18) pertaining to Sarasvatī, a *pra-ūga devatā*. Sāyaṇa says that the first two pādas of a *Gāyatrī* (i. e., of 1, 3, 12) pertain to Sarasvatī, the river and the third one to Sarasvatī, the goddess. (Here he deviates from the interpretation of Yāska who quotes this *ṛc* as an example of Sarasvatī, the goddess. In addition to it, Yāska never said that one part of the *ṛc* pertains to the river and the other part to the goddess). Scholiasts differ among themselves on the list of the *mantras* pertaining to the river Sarasvatī. Again in the *ṛc* 6, 52, 6 Sarasvatī has been taken as a mere river by the scholiasts. But here all the four deities,of which Sarasvatī is one (the other three are Indra, Parjanya and Agni.), have been implored. It will be quite wrong to take Sarasvatī here as a mere river whom the prayer to come with protection has been made as to Indra.[5] In 10, 75, 5 also all the river-goddesses (and not rivers) are requested to listen to their worshipper[6].

We also think that whenever in a *ṛc* there is praise or a prayer, may it be of an animate or inanimate object, that should be treated as a *ṛc* pertaining to a *devatā* because praise or prayer has been made there taking that object as a deity or deified entity. That is, may there be a stone, axe or tree, when a worshipper makes a request to a certain object he super-imposes on it the divine qualities and understands it as divinity. Though Yāska himself decried the existence of the worship of fetishistic nature in Nir. 1, 15, yet in his words *yatkāmā ṛṣi yasyāṁ devatāyāṁ ārthapatyam icchan stutiṁ prayuṅkte tad-daivataḥ sa mantro bhavati*, 'a particular stanza is said to belong to a deity, to whom a seer addresses his panegyrics with a particular desire, or from whom he wishes to obtain his object',[7] it is contained that the praise or prayer is made to a deity which in its turn determines the divinity to whom it is addressed. That praise or a prayer is made to a *devatā* and not to an object is also suggested in the words of Kātyāyana, *yā tenocyate sā devatā*, 'whatever is described or praised in a *mantra* is called *devatā* or a deity'. Again, the idea that praise or prayer is made to a deity is also suggested by the words of Bṛ. Dev. 1, 6 which correspond to those of Nirukta quoted above.

On this count there is only one *mantra* in the whole of the ṚV which refers to the river Sarasvatī and that is 3. 23, 4 where neither praise of nor prayer to Sarasvatī has been made. In 8,21, 18 also the scholiasts seem to have misunderstood the reference to Sarasvatī : Sāyaṇa explains *sarasvatīm anuvartante* i. e., "they (kings) follow Sarasvatī" as *rājānaḥ eva sarasvatyās tīre vartante* i. e. 'kings alone reside on the banks of the Sarasvatī'. The context does not warrant such an explanation as of Sāyaṇa. Here the phrase means that 'they (the kings) follow (the actions of) Sarasvatī'. Which actions ? Those which are referred to in the preceding *ṛc* (8, 21, 17) that is, bestowing wealth and treasure.

Thus in the *ṛc* the munificence of the goddess (i. e., her praise) is contained and therefore, this *mantra* should be taken as pertaining to the goddess and not to the river. In 10, 64, 9, too, Sarasvatī with Sarayu and Sindhu is invoked for bestowing her mighty help; she should not be taken; therefore, as a river here but a river-goddess.

Yāska did not quote any example where Sarasvatī is Vāk or Mādhyamikā Vāk. But to determine Sarasvatī as a Madhyamasthānā two qualities are to be kept in mind which are characteristic to an aerial deity[8] : (i) the deity should be connected with the downpour (*rasānupradāna*) (ii) the deity should perform acts requiring prowess (*balakṛti*).

According to Skandasvāmī Sarasvatī is often connected with these two characteristics. He says *pāvakā* means one that causes rain to fall[9]; *codayitṛ sūnṛtānām* means one that impels the aerial speech[10], *āpapruṣī* means one that fills up with her rain or thunderous voice[11]. *hiraṇyavartini* means one who has lightning as her path[12]; *apasām apastamā* means one who is active among the active ones because of her activity of rain and the like[13], and *mā paspharīḥ payasā mā na ā dhak* means rain unto our prosperity not to our ravage[14].

Besides, the killing of Vṛtra[15] and slaying the son of Bṛsaya, the detractor[16] are also ascribed to the goddess Sarasvatī. Sarasvatī is, therefore, taken as a goddess of the aerial region.

The explanation of certain functions and attributes put forth by Skandasvāmī (and other scholiasts also) as we have seen above is, surely, strained and laboured in order to interpret Sarasvatī as a goddess of the aerial region. These functions and attributes fit well as natural and unaffected in the context of the river-goddess Sarasvatī rather than in the context of Madhyamasthānā Sarasvatī; *pāvakā* as such, means 'purifying'[17], *sūnṛtā* means 'speech construed in conrast to *anṛta* (falsehood) i.e., truthful speech'. Hence *sūnṛtā* does not mean atmospheric speech'[18], *Āpapruṣī* means 'one who pervades', in this context one who pervades the terrestrial and atmospheric regions[19]. *Hiraṇyavartini* means one who treads the golden path. This epithet either occurs in the context of Sarasvatī[20] or in the context of another river named Śvetayavarī[21]. It suggests that the word is not to be connected with the atmospheric goddess. Rivers were believed to bring with them particles of gold from the mountains to the plains; Sarasvatī is believed even today as bringing with her sands tiny particles of gold. Where Sarasvatī just reaches the plains traversing hilly tracts the people there still sift riparian sands in

order to collect tiny particles of gold[22]. Sarasvatī is, therefore, said as *hiraṇyavartini*. *Apasām apastamā* 'most active amogst the active ones' is more characteristic to a river goddess than to an aerial goddess[23]. She bears this epithet because of her agile flood[24] or because of her swift billows[25]. *Māpaspharīḥ payasā mā na ā dhak*–is a request to the river-goddess not to overflow her banks and inundate the land of her devotees, causing devastation to their crops and quarters.

In this light we shall have to search for some fresh information in order to show that Sarasvatī is a goddess of aerial region.

Sarasvatī has been associated with the myth of killing Vṛtra. One may not disagree with Dr. A. C. Das[26] that since the Sarasvatī provided space to the Aryan Angirases headed by Bṛhaspati for the performance of a *sattra*, 'session of ceremonies', as a preparation for the ensuing fierce struggle of Indra against the demon of drought, Vala or Vṛtra, therefore, the river-goddess Sarasvatī rightly bears the epithet *Vṛtraghnī* But Sarasvatī, in addition to it, must have helped Indra in his valiant act of slaying the wily Vṛtra, an obstruction to flowing of the rivers *(nadīnām paridhiḥ[27])*. She is not only *Vṛtraghnī* in the sense that she supplies space for the preparation of the conflict but she is also herself *ghorā*, 'fierce'[28]. She would have also hurled the *vajra* on Vṛtra. She undoubtedly possessed that weapon that is why she is said as *pāvīravī (=āyudhavatī*; Veṅkaṭamādhava and Sāyaṇa). This is an Indo-European characteristic of a weather-god. The deity concerned with fecundity, who displays his activity in the atmosphere possesses a 'Donnerkeil' as his weapon or an attribute. A 'Donnerkeil' (thunder weapon) is either represented as an axe (*vajra*) or lightning[29].

Allied with the Maruts, she must have been offensive in conflict as is clear by her attribute *dhṛṣatī*, 'inflicting injury'[30]. In the context of the myth, we know that while all other gods once fled leaving Indra in the lurch, it was the Maruts alone who stood by Indra[31]. They helped Indra in his conflict with the dragon and Śambara[32]. The Maruts themselves smote Vṛtra assisted by Indra[33]. They sundered Vṛtra limb by limb, split the gloomy rocky-clouds and thus performed a valiant act[34]. The epithet *marudvatī* 'possessed of the Maruts' borne by Sarasvatī is therefore, much significant and suggests the intrepidity of Sarasvatī rather than her mere association with the Maruts. It is this form

of Sarasvatī which the solicitor has in his mind while praying to Sarasvatī to kill his foes, when by her side Indra is doing to death Vṛtra, the Chief of the Śaṇḍikas[35].

At another place[36] Sarasvatī is prayed to kill the offspring of Bṛsaya, the detractor *(devanid)*, pervading *(viśva)* (*i. e.* of wide influence) and employing stratagems *(māyin)*. The offspring of Bṛsaya is undoubtedly Vṛtra[37] because killing Vṛtra is ever followed by copious rain[38] which has been unmistakably referred to in the words—*viṣamebhyo asravo vājinīvatī*[39].

Sarasvatī's valiant nature *(balakṛti)* which is characteristic to an aerial god is quite manifest in her association with the myth of killing Vṛtra. Now this *balakṛti* is only instrumental to the act of *rasānupradāna*, 'pouring rain'. It is, therefore, enough to prove that Sarasvatī being a goddess of the aerial region is also connected with the act of shedding rain. Thus one need not labour to interpert all the attributes of Sarasvatī to conform to her form of an aerial goddess, since she is viewed in other forms also by the Vedic seer. But Sarasvatī's association with the Maruts and her contribution in the act of slaying Vṛtra and thereby causing rain to fall—are conducive to thinking of her place amongst the atmospheric deities[40].

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1. Nir. 11. 27- *vāgartheṣu vidhīyate/ Mādhyamikām vācaṁ manyante/*
2. Durga explains this *ṛc* in two forms—(i) pertaining to the river and (ii) pertaining to the goddess of aerial region. In the context of the latter form his interpretion-*devatāpakṣe Sarasvatī mādhyamikā vāk/Sā meghānāṁ (girīṇāṁ) sānūni bhañjati mahadbhiḥ taviṣebhiḥ stanayitnubhiḥ (urmibhiḥ) dyāvāpṛthivyau hanti (pārāvataghnī)*......etc. is unnatural, strained and not convincing.
3. Cf. *mātṛtamā*, ṚV 3, 33, 3, an epithet of Vipāṭ, another river-goddess.
4. According to Skandasvāmī (vide his comm. on 6, 61, 2) Śākapūṇi believed that 2, 41; 16; 3, 23, 4; 8,21, 18, 10, 75,5; —the five *mantras* only pertain to the Sarasvatī (river). Skandasvāmī adds in this list the *mantra* 6, 61, 2. Śaunaka (Bṛ. Dev. 2, 136-137) asserts that there are only six *mantras* of the river Sarasvatī and the seventh of such a type is not found. His list comprises of 2, 41, 16; 3, 23, 4; 6, 52, 6; 7, 95, 2; 8, 21, 18; and 10, 64, 9; but he says that Yāska accepts 6, 61, 2 as the seventh in the series. But in all these *ṛcs* except one viz., 3, 23, 4, Sarasvatī has been invoked or eulogized as a river goddess.

5. *Sindhubhiḥ pinvamānā* may be taken here as meaning swelling by the (celestial) rivers who feed the river-goddess Sarasvatī. Cf. Sarasvatī at another place (7, 36, 6) has been said as '*sindhumātā*'—one who has (celestial) Sindhu (oceans or big rivers) as her mother (i.e. source); it is to be noted here that for reasons of accent *sindhumātā* cannot be taken as *Tatpuruṣa* compound as the scholiasts have done.
6. Rivers (terrestrial goddesses—Nigh. 5, 3) have been glorified, worshipped and solicited to listen as divinities being considered as sacred because of there association with gods, or because of their beneficence and bounty towards men. (Explained supra p. 4 f.) Indra and the Maruts themselves tilled the region through which the Sarasvatī flowed (Av. 6, 30, 1). For her association with godheads, Sarasvatī herself would have become a godhead. In ṚV., too, a Ṛṣi named Viśvamanā is sticking to the riparian region of the river *Śvetayāvarī* because it is sacred to him on account of its association with the Aśvins (8, 26, 18; 19); 'he glorifies the river as a goddess'—Sāyaṇa. If older Ṛṣis glorified Sarasvatī for her association with gods, it is no wonder that the younger Ṛṣis deified the river for her compassion towards their forefathers. Her association with the elder seers is alluded to (i) in the *ṛc* 6, 61, 10-*uta naḥ priyā—sujuṣṭā (suṣṭu purātanaiḥ ṛṣibhiḥ sevitā*—Sāyaṇa), (ii) by the words *pūrvayā nividā* (1, 89, 3) and (iii) *Sarasvatīm sukṛto ahvyanta* (10, 17, 7).
7. Nir. 7, 1.
8. Yāska, Nir. VII, 10.
9. Skandasvāmī's comm. on 1, 3, 10.
10. Ibid., 1, 3, 11.
11. Ibid., 6, 61, 11.
12. Ibid., 6, 61, 7.
13. Ibid., 6, 61, 13.
14. Ibid., 6, 61, 14.
15. 6, 61, 7.
16. 6, 61, 3.
17. This meanig of the word is quite natural; '*pāvaka*' is almost a distinct epithet of Agni, who purifies.
18. Compare, Uṣas is said as '*sunṛtāvatī*' possessed of truthful speech. Nigh. 1, 8.
19. This is a characteristic which is shared by most of the Ṛgvedic gods. Almost all gods have bcen associated with the two regions. VM. p. 15
20. 6, 61, 7. Sāyaṇa (comm. 8, 25, 18) interprets the word-*hiraṇmayasvīyamārgā hiraṇmayobhayakūlā*. Cf. Sindhu is also called rich in gold *hiraṇyayī*—10, 75,8. Griffith and Bhattacharya (K.B. Pathak Comm. Vol. p. 36 n. 2) take Śvetayāvarī as an attribute of Sindhu in 8,26,18
21. 8, 26, 18.
22. Imperial Gazetteer of India, Vol. XXII, Oxford, 1908, p. 97.
23. This epithet is shared by the river-god Sindhu also, 10, 75, 8.
24. *Cariṣṇu arṇavaḥ*—6, 61, 8.
25. 6, 61, 2.
26. Ṛgvedic India p. 56-58.
27. 3, 33, 6. The word Vṛtra (neuter) originally represented 'an abstract idea of obstruction' Louis Renou, Religions of India, London, 1953, p. 19.

28. 6, 61, 7.
29. See Chr. Blinkenberg, The thunder weapon in religion and folklore, Cambridge, 1911. Sarasvatī is comparable here with the Babylonian goddess Istar (see G. Contenau, La, deesse nue babyloniemme, Paris 1914, p. 120 f.) and the Iranian Anāhitā (see E. Benveniste, the Persian religion according to the chief Greek texts, Paris 1929, p. 27 f. and p. 61 ff.) who have double character combining fecundity and warlike courage.
30. 2, 30, 8. 31. VM. p. 60. 32 ṚV 3, 47, 3-4. 33. 1, 23, 9.
34. 8, 7, 23.
35. Sāyaṇa (comm. 2, 30, 8) quoting Taitt. S. 6, 4, 10, 1 shows that Śaṇda means *asura*; Veṅkaṭamādhava here is more specific when he interprets the chief among the Śaṇḍikas as Vṛtra.
36. 6, 61. 3.
37. Sāyaṇa following Veṅkaṭamādhava righty points out that Bṛsaya is the father of Vṛtra but Skandasvāmī and most of the modern scholars (Ved. Ind. Vol. II. p. 70) incorrectly take Bṛsaya as a particular caste or class *(jātiviśeṣa)*, probably that of the sorcerers which has been decried and reprimanded in the ṚV. At another place (1, 93, 3) Agni-Soma, a dual divinity having killed the offspring of Bṛsaya secured one particular light for many. Now 'winning the light' is a fruit that is accrued after killing Vṛtra; see e.g., 3, 34, 8; 8, 78, 4. Hence the offspring of Bṛsaya is Vṛtra and none else.
38. Cf. 3, 34, 8; 9.
39. *Viṣam* is not here the poison but water (Nigh. 1, 12) rather rainwater when viewed in the presence of the verb, *asravaḥ*.
40. Both the divinities—Sarasvatī and the Maruts are prayed to be pleased with the panegyrics of the Vasiṣṭhas, 7, 39, 5; both are requested to respond and confer wealth with noble offspring, 3,54,13, the man, who is favoured by the Maruts, is extended a helping hand by Sarasvatī and Agni, too, nobody then is able to relieve him of his riches, 7, 40. 3; for her association with the Maruts, she bears the epithets—*Marutsakhā* (7, 96, 2) and *Marudvatī* (2, 30, 8).

Sarasvatī—the Goddess of the Warrior-Class.

Dumezil classifies Sarasvatī amongst the deities of 'third function' and thus associates her with peasantry and mercantile society[1]. This characteristic which might have been borne by Sarasvatī, or by her representative goddess in the Indo-European pantheon, was retained by her even as an Aryan goddess. But as a result of the local influence, she developed the characteristics around her person of the goddess of 'second function'. That is, she came to be associated with warrior class—the people who worshipped the deities of the 'second function'.

The ṚV alludes the fact that rituals were performed even at the onset of conflicts[2]. Religious ceremonies seem to have

been hampered by the detractors[3] and the niggardly Paṇis[4] at home and by invaders like the Pārāvatas from abroad[5]. In these circumstances, the warrior class (which would have assumed the form of caste by then) ran into prominence politically. This class of warriors had taken the god of thunder and lightning—Indra, for its god of battle. It was natural for a fighting race to exalt the highest fighting god of the pantheon. Amongst the goddesses Sarasvatī's characteristics stood akin to Indra. As a deity of atmospheric region, she, too, was endowed with the qualities of *balakṛti*, 'act of valiance', and *rasānupradāna*, 'shedding the rain', which were similar to those of Indra. As a result of this similarity, she was given such attributes as were characteristic of Indra. See, for example, her attributes—*vṛtraghnī*, *marut-sakhā*, *marud-vati*, *pāvīravī'*, *ghorā*, *akavārī*, *vājeṣu vājinī* and *vīrapatnī*, which correspond to Indra's almost specific attributes *vṛtrahā*, *marut-sakhā*, *marud-vān*, *pavīra-vān*, *ghora*, *akavāri*, *vājeṣu vājin* and *vīra*. This similarity of the attributes of Sarasvatī to those of Indra definitely alludes to the close association of Sarasvatī with Indra, the god of the warrior class[6]. Hence we can say that Sarasvatī, too, was exalted by this warrior class (or caste) as a goddess of battle.

She was thus prayed to wipe out those who censured the gods and protect her devotees from such detractors[7]. Allied with the Maruts (the chief allies of Indra in his conflict against Vṛtra[8]), she is prayed to provide protection against foes and conquer them like Indra who beheads the fierce and mighty chieftain of the Śaṇḍikas (i.e., Vṛtra–Sāyaṇa[9]). She is invoked to slay singly Vṛtra, son of the cunning Bṛsaya[10] who has wide spread influence[11]. She is besought to protect the devotee who invokes her like Indra at the onset of the battle *(vṛtratūrye)* which is fought for the attainment of wealth *(dhane hite)*[12]. Strong or possessed of army[13] *(vājinī)* Sarasvatī is solicited to supply succour during battles *(vājeṣu)* also[14]. She has been making prosperous the famous Five People (because of her unstinted support and succour to them in their perilous adventures) and, therefore, she should be invoked in every conflict *(vāje vāje yuddhe yuddhe sarveṣu yuddheṣu*—Sāyaṇa[15]). Or she was invoked at the beginning of every conflict because her mettle in the battle-field was established among celestial beings; as we know that allied with the Maruts, she would have been offensive, in the conflict against Vṛtra, for the benefit of the Five People, as is shown by her attri-

bute *dhṛṣatī*, 'inflicting injury[16]'. She was possessed of a weapon hence her epithet *pāvīravī*[17].

But the protective support of this goddess of the warrior class was not available to privileged warriors alone, it was also available to commoners. She, along with Agni and the Maruts, protects the riches of the devotee from the robbers[18]. A suppliance to Sarasvatī by a commoner is interesting in this context : As Sūrya gets across day after day incessantly and never lets it (the day) come back again, so may Sarasvatī digress over fiends in addition to our foes[19]. Here again Sarasvatī comes nearer to Indra who is said to have been created by gods as a destroyer of fiends[20].

But how did the river-goddess Sarasvatī provide protection to her mundane protegés ? It seems that her currents would hava constituted a permanent barrier against the inroads of morose marauders.

We have ample information in the ṚV to postulate that there had been warlike activities on her banks. Divodāsa, a warrior of rank, who revenged the defeat of his forefathers and was therefore styled 'canceller of debts', who annihilated the Paṇis (the churlish niggard) and hence said as fierce *(rabhasa)*, who was born to Vadhryaśva by the benison of the goddess Sarasvatī, lived on her banks[21]. The Śunahotras, the Purus and the Vasiṣṭhas lived on the banks of Sarasvatī and it seems that in their steady progress east-wards[22], the Aryan tribes were stopped for a time in the region of the Sarasvatī and were unable to find their way through the masses of the aborigines holding the great gateway of India[23]. These aborignals were, in all probability, the Pārāvatas with whom the Aryans might have come into conflict. Perhaps a decisve battle with the Pārāvatas would have been fought then on the banks of the Sarasvatī as is suggested by her epithet *Pārāvataghnī*[24].

Sarasvatī, the easternmost region of the Aryans, would have been subjected to repeated inroads by the Pārāvatas. They would have been defeated on the banks of the Sarasvatī, and while fleeing had been swept away in the swift-billows of the river flowing in its hilly course because they would have failed in haste to manage those means to cross the river by which they had crossed it earlier. Thus the Pārāvatas could not swim to their life back to their lands. The river-goddess was thus called *pārāvataghnī*.

In a Dānastuti of Citra[25], it is indicated that the king celebrated its victory in a recent battle on the banks of the Sarasvatī. The gift referred to here as worthy of being given by Indra, Sarasvatī or Citra is nothing but booty, almost a shower of wealth *(parjanya it tatanad hi vṛṣṭyā)* as he gave in thousands (*sahasramayutā dadat*). After the act of his chivalry (which is implied here and not mentioed) he made such an outstanding gift to his accomplices in intrepidity as other princes could not do for which they appeared as dimunitive in status (i.e. kinglings) in comparison with him.

Sarasvatī has also been said as *vīra-patnī*[26], which according to one meaning is *vīrāṇām pālayitrī* 'the protectress of the heroes'. We have shown below that *vīra-patnī* means the protectress of *vīra* Indra. However, it will be quite natural to think, in the light of the discussion recorded above about *Pārāvataghnī* that Sarasvatī, who was on one hand a protectress of Indra, on the other hand she was a protectress of the Aryans. In another *ṛc*[27], *vīrapatnī* is used as a proper name for the river (which is none else but Sarasvatī) that along with other two river-goddesses Añjasī and Kulaśī delight Indra with their waters rich in butter. Again in another *ṛc*[28] Indra is said to have formed nectar in the three rivers which in all probability are those as mentioned above i.e., Sarasvatī, Añjasī and Kulaśī. In this prayer it is implied that the warriors are reminded of the waters of Sarasvatī which saved them and thus they thought as if they were nectar for them and it was Indra, the god of war who had created nectar, the life-giving fluid. Thus Sarasvatī and Indra were glorified by the warriors living on the banks of the Sarasvatī.

The same idea is contained in a verse where gushing water *(pra-kṣodas)* of Sarasvatī is characterised as life-bestowing*(dhāyas)*. The river was thus a natural Warden of the Marches for the Aryan clans. It is no wonder then that the Aryans called Sarasvatī 'a fortress of iron', *(āyasī pūḥ)*, 'the sure defence' *(dharuṇam)*.

Sarasvatī's epithet *pañca-jātā vardhayantī*[29] also fits her person as a goddess of the warrior class. The Five People, being the beneficiaries of Indra[30] were, in all probability, the warrior classes who played an active role in the growth of the Vedic ritual. Sarasvatī like Indra made them to thrive by her succour rendered to them in various ways, i.e., in peace by her power of fecundity and in war by the prowess and agility of her swelling currents.

Thinking on these lines, we can explain the solicitation made to the Sarasvatī in 6, 52, 6. Sarasvatī, who is swelling with her streams, is requested here, by the side of Indra, to come near to the worshipper (i.e.,the worshipping warrior) for protection. That is, the ever swelling bed of the river-goddess would have been for the Aryans a sure protection. Perhaps the same idea is repeated in 10, 64, 9 where Sarasvatī, Sarayu and Sindhu are requested to come nearer the worshipper for help(*avasā*) (in the battle-field)[31]. Similarly 1, 3, 12 also, probably, means that she makes manifest (*pra-cetayati*) her mighty flood (*maho-arṇaḥ*) by her (prompt) action (*ketunā*) (against the enemies); i.e., her mighty flood is looked upon with honour by the people, for she has swept away by her swift billows the fleeing hordes of the alien forces who had come to disturb the sacrifice or plunder the Aryans; she is, therefore, said to preside over (*rājati*)[32] the sacrificial acts or prayers of the suppliant (*dhiyaḥ*). That is, by virtue of her mighty flood, the sacrificial acts are being carried on uninterruptedly for the non-existence of any fear from the aliens. In the preceding *ṛc* (1, 3, 11), too, she is requested to protect or strengthen[33] the sacrifice. Because she provided protection and ample room and atmosphere to the Vedic ritualist, she is styled 'an impeller of beautiful songs' (*codayitrī sunṛtānām*) and an 'inspirer of noble thoughts' (*cetantī sumatīnām*).

1. Refer to C. Scott Littleton, The New Comparative Mythology, California, 1966, pp. 9–11. According to Dumezil Indo-European deities of 'first function' were popular amongst intellectuals, of 'second funtion' amongst warriors and those of 'third function' amongst peasantry and mercantile class.
2. 6, 61, 5. 3. *Deva-nidaḥ*–6, 61, 3. 4. 6, 61, 1.
5. Refer to her epithet *pārāvataghnī*, killer of the Pārāvatas, 6, 61, 2.
6. In the context of the Sautrāmaṇī in the latter Vedic texts we read that Sarasvatī was consulted by Indra in the acts of prowess.
7. 6, 61, 11. Skandasvāmī's interpretation is different from that of Sāyaṇa and Veṅkaṭamādhava. He does not render *nidaḥ* as 'detractors of gods' but he renders it as *ninditāt nindato vā*—i.e., according to him, Sarasvatī here has been prayed to protect from the ignominous or from the ignominy.
8. The Maruts alone stood by Indra at the time when all gods had fled leaving Indra in the lurch in his conflict against Vṛtra (4, 18, 11; 8, 85, 7 and also Ait. Br. 3, 20).
9. 2, 30, 8.
10. Sāyaṇa, however, holds that Indra killed Vṛtra with the help of Sarasvatī. This is alluded to by his words—*tvat sāhayyādevendro hatavān ity-arthaḥ.*

11. 6, 61, 3. 12. 6, 61, 5.
13. Skandasvāmī : *vājo balaṁ vego vā, tadvatī vājinī/Kā Ssau/Sarasvatyāḥ svabhūtā senā.*
14. 6, 61, 6. 15. 6, 61, 12. 16. 2, 30, 8. 17. 6, 49, 7; 10, 65, 13.
18. 7, 40, 3.
19. 6, 61, 3. Translation here is based on the comm. of Skandasvāmī.
20. 3, 49, 1.
21. 6, 61, 1. Hillebrandt has given an account of his martial career, Ved. Ind. Vol. I p. 363.
22. Oldenberg says that the general direction of the Aryan migrants was from cold and poor lands to those warmer and richer, Griswold, The Religion of the Ṛgveda, p. 45.
23. "That what really stopped the Aryan advance was dense aboriginal population of the Jumna-Ganges valley" says James Kenneddy : The Aryan Invasion of Northern India JRAS, October, 1919, p. 513.
24. The interpretation by sholiasts of *Pārāvataghnī* as 'one that cuts at its banks' seems to be wrong. Firstly, we have in Nigh. III, 26, *parāvataḥ–dūranāma*, *pārāvatāḥ* would thus mean the people coming from distant lands. Secondly, such a people actually lived on the hilly tracts of the Yamunā, who were sometimes at war and sometimes at peace with the Aryans according to the Pañcaviṁśa Br. 9, 4, 11. Hillebrandt's suggestion (Ved. Ind. Vol. I. p.519) that they were originally mountaineers seem to be convincing because their reference in Ṛv. 6, 61, 2, too, is made by the side of the Sarasvatī flowing in hilly tracts. Thirdly, the equation of *pārāvata* with *pārāvara* (Nir. 2, 24) is not convincing linguistically for want of morphological similarity in second half of both these words. Fourthly, we have root *han*, *hiṁsāyām* i. e., 'to injure' but nowhere in the Veda has it been applied to mean 'to erode'. On the other hand the suffixes *han*, *ghnī* mean 'slayer' in the words *vṛtrahā* and *vṛtraghnī*. Fifthly, Sarasvatī's epithet 'killer of the Pārāvatas' is perfectly in apposition with her other attributes *ghorā* and *Vṛtraghnī*. Sixthly, in the context, Sarasvatī is said to be flowing in the hilly region. Erosion of banks according to by Thornbury (Geomorphology, John Willy & Sons, I. N. C. New Yark, 1954, p. 40) is effected only when the river is in the second stage i. e., in the plains while it deepens its course when it flows in the hilly tracts.
25. 8, 21, 17; 18. 26. 6, 49, 7.
27. 1, 104, 4; it seems to be a glorification of Indra made by a successful warrior.
28. 6, 47, 4. 29. 6, 61, 12.
30, See below under discussion of the epithet *pañca-jātā vardhayantī*.
31. 'Help' here may mean help in the battle-field. *Yaṁ yudhyamānā avase havante*, 'whom (i.e., to Indra) they (i.e., the warriors) summon for help (in the battle-field),' 2, 12, 9.
32. Nigh. 2, 21—*aiśvarya-karmaṇaḥ*.
33. *Dadhe—dhāraya; poṣaya*—Sāyaṇa.

Sarasvatī's Association with Other Gods

Though there are very many prayers and panegyrics of individual gods, but no god, may he be the mightiest amongst all, has been shown as functioning independently of all, when all spheres of his action are taken into account. He may be performing this act or that one in his individual capacity but most of his functions are witnessed as being carried out in association with other divinities. Such an association is frequent and varied in case of Sarasvatī, as in case of other divinities. Her relations with other deities have been ever pleasing, friendly and helping because we do not meet with any reference in which she has been shown as hostile to any other divinity. Out of all the places in the ṚV, where she is referred to, her association with other gods and goddesses is indicated in nearly two-third of the passages.

A consideration of Sarasvatī's association with other gods and of the purport of those passages in which she is mentioned in their company will be greatly helpful in revealing the character of the goddess.

The number of deities with whom Sarasvatī is more than incidentally associated is not very large. In the *sūktas* addressed to Viśvedevāḥ, Sarasvatī's name is several times mentioned together with Indra, the Maruts, Agni, Pūṣan, Dhī, Puraṁdhi, Aja Ekapād, Sindhu, Ādityas, Soma, Aśvins, Bhaga, Pitṛs, Sarasvat, Parjanya, Varuṇa, Mitra, Aditi, Viśvedevāḥ, Devāḥ, Maruta, Gnāḥ, Rudra, Bṛhaddivā, Rākā, Indrāṇī, Varuṇānī Guṅgū, Sinīvālī, Vāyu, Vāta Vidhātṛ, Damunasaḥ, Pṛthivī, Parvataḥ, Vanaspati, Sapta-sindhavaḥ, Bṛhaspati, Tvaṣṭṛ, Savitṛ, Brahmanaspati, Aryaman & Viṣṇu[1]. In similar texts showing fewer names Sarasvatī is often joined with the Maruts, Indra, the Aśvins, Agni, the Āpaḥ and the Rivers. If any desire is experssed at all these divine powers are implored for blessing, happiness, food, protection and to be accordant with the worshipper or listen to his solicitation or visit the place of sacrifice[2].

1. Refer to 1, 89, 3; 2, 32, 8; 5, 42, 12; 46, 2; 6, 50, 12; 52, 6; 7, 9, 5; 35, 11; 39, 5; 8, 54, 4; 9, 81, 4; 10, 65, 1; 13; 66, 5; 141, 5; 184, 2.
2. 5, 42, 12; 46, 2; 9, 81, 4; 10, 65, 13; 75, 5.

Sarasvatī and Indra

Discussing the atmospheric form of the goddess we have already observed that Sarasvatī is depicted as performing the acts of valiance *(balakṛti)* and shedding rain *(rasānupradāna)* which are peculiar to the deities of Indra's group[1]. Since Sarasvatī stood by the side of Indra when he did to death the chieftain of the Śaṇḍikas[2], for reasons of prowess as such, she has been once compared to Indra in the context of the onset of a battle[3]. Again discussing her as a goddess related to the warrior class, we have also seen that Sarasvatī bears some attributes corresponding literally to those of Indra which speak of her close relationship with him.

Sarasvatī, in conjuction with the Aśvins, cured Indra when he had overdrunk the liquor that gladdens (*surāmam*) and was confronting Namuci of Asura birth[4]. Since the waters of the river-goddess Sarasvatī are said to be invigorating being rich in fatness and honey etc[5]., and hence possessing a remedial value[6], it is no wonder that she cured Indra by them[7]. Since Sarasvatī cured Indra, she is called *vīra-patnī*, the protectress of the *vīra* (Indra). This idea is again contained in a *ṛc* where Indra is said as being delighted by three rivers, to wit, the Añjasī, the Kuliśī and the Vīrapatnī, who bear milk upon their waters[8]. Vīrapatnī, the river-goddess in this *ṛc* is none else but Sarasvatī. Indra seems to have repaid his indebtedness to these three rivers when he is said as forming nectar in them[9]. Though the names of these three rivers are not mentioned here but they can be well identified with the Añjasī, the Kuliśī and the Vīrapatnī who have been formerly stated as associated with Indra. At another place the river-goddess Sarasvatī being one of the Seven Rivers[10] is a recipient of munificence of Indra who smote Vṛtra in order to release waters of seven rivers.[11]

Sarasvatī and Indra are the standards of comparison amongst the munificent few, like the king Citra who shower wealth and great treasure on the worshipper[12].

1. Nir. VII, 10. 2. 2, 30, 8. 3. 6, 61, 5. 4. 10, 13, 4; 5.
5. 7, 56, 6; 9, 64, 32.
6. Cf Amṛta is in the waters, in the waters healing medicine', ṚV 1, 23, 19.
7. Weber suggests (what Griffith calls a rationalistic explanation) that Sarasvatī, the river, that is cold water is referred to here; Texts of the White Yajurveda, Griffith, Banaras, 1957, p. 228, note.

8. 1, 104, 4 9. 6, 47, 4. 10. 7, 36, 6.

11. *Avasṛjaḥ sartave sapta-sindhūn*-1, 32, 12. From 8, 69, 12 we know that Varuṇa also holds a sway on the 'seven-rivers' : *'Sudevo asi Varuṇa te yasya Sapta-sindhavaḥ'*.

12. 8, 21, 17.

Sarasvatī and Agni

In a prayer[1] Agni has been requested to bring all gods (in general) and Sarasvatī, the Maruts, Aśvins and the waters in particular) so that they may confer riches on sacrificers. In another prayer[2] Sarasvatī and the Maruts are requested to be joyful (i. e., gracious towards the sacrificer) through an invocation to Agni. Both the divinites, Sarasvatī and Agni, promote the worshipper who is a favourite of the Maruts; because of their majesty, there is none then who may plunder his pelf[3].

In another prayer[4] Sarasvatī, along with Damūnasaḥ[5] (the Domestic Ones) (i. e. Agnis of the three regions) and others, is requested to befriend worshippers.

Dr. A. C. Das[6] says "Sarasvatī in the ṚV is the name of not only the river and of the region watered by her, but also of Agni or sacrifical Fire. The Fire first kindled in the region of Sarasvatī, was called by that name. This observation of Dr. Das seems to be true, because it is this Fire which is intent in the prayers of the Tisro Devīḥ. In a *ṛc*[7] Agni is equated with each goddess of the triad, i. e., Iḷā, Sarasvatī and Bhāratī. Bhāratī with the Bhāratīs (i. e., goddesses subordinate to her)[8] Iḷā with gods and Sarasvatī with the Sārasvatas[9] are requested to be seated on the sacred grass strewn by the side of the altar along with Agni accompained by men[10].

At least three epithets *pāvakā, dhiyā-vasuḥ* and *triṣadhasthā* (explained below) which are characteristic of Agni are brone by Sarasvatī. They also speak of affinity between them.

1. 7, 9, 5. 2. 7, 39, 5 3. 7, 40, 3. 4. 5, 42, 12

5. Damūnasaḥ is an epithet which seems to be standing for terrestrial, atmospheric and celestial Agnis. It is characteristically borne by Agni; though twice (1, 123, 3; 6, 71, 4) Savitṛ also is spoken of as *damūnas*-VM, p. 33.

6. Op. cit. p. 57. 7. 2, 1, 11. 8. *svānucaribhiḥ*(—)Veṅkaṭamādhava.

9. Gods subordinate to her-Veṅkaṭamādhava. 10. 3, 4; 8(=7, 2, 8).

Sarasvatī and Indra-Agnī

Indra-Agnī, a dual divinity, is said to be, 'possessed of Sarasvatī'; (*sarasvatīvatoḥ*) whose grace is sought by the worshipper[1]. This epithet speaks of the close relationship of the goddess with both Indra and Agni (the members of the dual divinity).[2]

1. 8, 38, 10. Sāyaṇa interprets *Sarasvatī* here as *stuti*, and renders *Sarasvati-vatoḥ* by *stutī-matoḥ*, 'possessers (in dual number) of panegyric', i. e. 'worshipful'. Dr. Surya Kanta (Saras, Soma and Sira, ABORI Vol. XXXVIII, Parts I-II, p. 128) says : "The word *'Sarasvatī-vatoḥ'* is explained by *'yābhyāṁ gāyatram ṛcyate'* and this also is a hint at the real meaning of saras (=soma)". That is, Sarasvatī would mean here 'Somavati' according to Dr. Surya Kanta. But this is a far fetched meaning. Sarasvatī here may be taken in her usual form—a goddess of terrestrial or atmospheric region.

2. In the Vedic idiom we observe that an attribute of a deity which consists of the suffix *matup*, appended to the appellation of a second deity, shows the close relationship of the former with the latter; see, for example, Indra is referred to as *Marud-vān* (1,20, 15;23, 7;8, 76, 1; 4; 6; 8. etc.) and Sarasvatī as *Marud-vatī* (2, 30, 8) in order to show that there exists a close relationship between the Maruts and Indra and again that between the Maruts and Sarasvatī

Sarasvatī and the Maruts

Sarasvatī has often been associated with the Maruts[1], and as such has acquired a very prominent and at the same time an exclusive attribute Marudvatī, 'attended by the Maruts'.[2] She has been also a *Marut-sakhā*, 'a comrade of the Maruts'[3]. These attributes are true to their spirit inasmuch as the sphere of activity of Sarasvatī is almost identical to that of the Maruts. The Maruts like Sarasvatī are associated with lightning, thunder, wind and rains and as such their activities in the ṚV are generally confined to the atmospheric region.[4]

In some prayers where reference to a number of deities including Sarasvatī and the Maruts is made, Sarasvatī (not because of any pre-eminence but because of the need of the metre, perhaps), is mentioned immediately ahead of the Maruts.[5] These references, too, tend to show the nearness of relations between the two divinities. In a prayer to the Viśvedevāḥ,[6] we may read some more closeness in the relations of Sarasvatī and the Maruts. The *ṛc* mainly contains the praise of and prayer to the Maruts (as is alluded to by the beginning and the ending of the *ṛc*). The insertion of a prayer to Sarasvatī in between makes us think that the two divinities would

have been thought by the Vedic Ṛṣi as acting conjointly in certain spheres. The prayer : *dhātā rayiṁ sahavīraṁ turāsaḥ*, 'O Mighty ones, may you give us riches with noble male issues', contained in the fourth pāda of this *ṛc* alludes to their sphere of influence[7]. Another corresponding prayer *dhātā rayim-avidasyaṁ sadāsām* is made to these two divinities.[8] In order to determine the degree or type of their relationship, we shall read between the lines of the *ṛc* 7, 40, 3 : 'Strong be the man and full of power, O Maruts, whom ye, borne on by spotted courses, favour. Him, too, Sarasvatī and Agni further, and there is none to rob him of his riches[9]. According to an interpretation of this *ṛc*, a person, who is favoured by the Maruts, is also gladdened by Agni and Sarasvatī, their (of the Maruts) attendants[10]. This does not seem to be correct. The underlying idea, in all probability, is that to a person who is favoured by the Maruts Sarasvatī and Agni also being the allies of the Maruts become favourable. So Sararsvatī and Agni seem here to be *sahacaras*, 'friends' of the Maruts and not *anucaras*, 'attendants'. Moreover, Sarasvatī (in 7,96,2) and Agni (in 8, 103, 14) both (as we have mentioned above) are styled as *Marut-sakhā*, 'comrade of the Maruts'which clearly shows the type of their relationship. That is, they should be ranked as friends to the Maruts.

Sarasvatī and the Maruts have a common parenthood, because both the divinities have the (celestial) ocean as their mother.[11]

1. 3, 54, 13; 7, 9, 5; 39, 5; 40, 3. 2. 2, 30, 8.
3. These attributes also indicate the relation of Sarasvatī with Indra who is Maruvān and Marut-sakhā, 8, 76,1-9. Though these epithets are sometimes applied to other gods (e. g., to Agni, 8, 103, 14) but they are characteristic of Indra. Cf. VM, p. 57. Besides Indra,Indrāṇī also by virtue of her husband once shares this epithet (10, 86, 9).
4. See, e. g., 1, 38, 9; 5, 53, 6; 10, 54, 3; 59, 5; 7; 8; 65, 13.
5. 7, 9, 5; 7, 39, 5. 6. 3, 54, 13.
7. But it is not their exclusive sphere of action. Other gods also have been prayed in the similar style. See, e. g., a prayer to Indra : *asme rayiṁ rāsi vīravantam*, 2, 11, 13.
8. 7, 39, 6. It is not a prayer to Viśvedevāḥ, 'gods in general'. In the preceding *ṛc* i.e., 7, 39, 5. Sarasvatī and the Maruts alone, in contrast to other divinites, are spoken of in the nominative who may be connected with verb contained in the *ṛc* that follows i. e., 7, 39, 6.
9. Translation by R. T. H. Griffith.
10. See Veṅkaṭamādhava's comm. *Api ca enam Agniḥ Sarasvatī ca tad anucarāś ca.*

11. Cf. Sarasvatī's epithet *Sindhumātā* (7, 36, 6) and that of the Maruts *Sindhumātaraḥ* (10, 78, 6). For reasons of accent both are to be taken as *Bahuvrīhi* compounds.

Sarasvatī and the Aśvins

We have already observed that with the Aśvins Sarasvatī acted as a physician once in the ṚV (but regularly as such in the Yajurveda[1]) to cure Indra who had overdrunk Soma[2].

Allied with the Aśvins and Sinīvālī, Sarasvatī is invoked to make a woman fruitful[3]. Keeping in mind the process of the development of conception(embryo), Viṣṇu is solicited to fashion vulva (*yoni*), Tvaṣṭṛ to shape the form (*rūpāṇi*), Prajāpati to water i.e. sprinkle semen, Dhātṛ(the Creator) to bestow conception (*garbha*)[4]. Sinīvālī, Sarasvatī and the Aśvins are implored to hold and protect the implanted impregnation (*niṣiktam garbham*—Sāyaṇa). With the Aśvins,the divine physicians famous for their remedial succour, Sarasvatī has been requested here to grant conception and guard it from miscarriage.

Like the Maruts, the Aśvins also are said to have the *sindhu* (celestial ocean) as their mother[5], therefore, all the three divinities are conceived to have a common source in heaven.

1. See the contexts of the Sautrāmaṇī in the Vajasaneyī Saṁhitā, Books XIX-XXI.
2. 10, 131, 4; 5. 3. 10, 184, 2. 4. 10, 184, 1. 5. 1, 46, 2.

Sarasvatī and Nadyaḥ

The Rivers have been treated as divine beings and glorified with prayers and eulogies. The Nighaṇṭu[1] classifies them amongst terrestrial deities. Sarasvatī along with Sarayu and Sindhu is once requested to come nearer to the worshipper for help[2]. In the *Nadī-sūkta* also Sarasvatī has been requested to hear call of the worshipper in conjuction with six other major (*pradhāna-bhūtāḥ—Sāyaṇa*)[3] and three minor (*avayava bhūtāḥ*)[4] river-goddesses. Sarasvatī is referred to as *saptathī sindhumātā*, 'seventh (river) having (celestial) ocean as its mother.' That is, she is one of the river-goddesses who are flowing (*suṣvayanta*) together, full of food (*yaśasaḥ annavatyaḥ*—Sāyaṇa), full of fondness (*vāvaśānāḥ kāmayamānāḥ*), of copious milk, of fair streams, swelling fully with their own waters. In other words, Sarasvatī is spoken of as a constituent of river-goddesses(*nadyaḥ*). This fact is also alluded to in an another prayer[5] where the *nadyaḥ* are said

as *vibhvataṣṭāḥ* 'carved out by Vibhvan[6] i.e., Prajāpati[7] and Sarasvatī being one of them, therefore, said as *Vibhvane kṛtā*, 'made by Vibhvan (Prajāpati)[8].

Often the river-goddess Sarasvatī is spoken of in superlative terms amongst the sister-rivers; she is thus said *asuryā nadīnām*, 'divine amongst the rivers[9], *nadīnām śuciḥ*, 'pure amongst the rivers[10], *nadītamā*, 'best amongst the rivers[11]. The Vedic Ṛṣis, though acquainted with numerous rivers including the Sindhu and the Gaṅgā, call Sarasvatī the best, strongest, swiftest, purest, most divine, etc.

She is also called *sindhumātā*[12] which is wrongly translated as 'mother of the rivers'[13]. *Sindhu-mātā* is a *Bahuvrīhi* compound as it accentuates its first member, it is therefore to be translated here as 'one who has(celestial)ocean as her mother'. Here in the phrase *Sarasvatī saptathī sindhumātā* the word *sindhumātā* clearly indicates that all rivers have the (celestial) ocean as their mothers, because Sarasvatī is said to be *saptathī*, i. e., 'seventh (in the system) having the celestial ocean as her mother' and therefore, the remaining six of the system are also corresponding to her. Thus the word *sindhu-mātā* indicates that a river derives its water from the heavenly store-house of water.[14]

1. 5, 3. 2. 10, 64, 9.
3. They are Gaṅgā, Śutudrī, Paruṣṇī, Asiknī and Ārjīkīyā.
4. They are : Marudvṛdhā (a tributary of Asiknī), Vitastā and Suṣomā (the two tributaries of Arjīkīyā).
5. 5, 42, 12. 6. Vibhvan means lit. the 'eminent', 'artist' from '*vi*' and the root '*bhū*'—VM, p. 133.
7. Veṅkaṭamādhava's rendering of '*Vibhvataṣṭāḥ*'as *mahatāmapi tanukartryaḥ*', 'making (i. e. turning) even the big ones as tiny ones' is not convincing since it stands contrary to the nature of the rivers who are usually linked with the idea of increasing and developing, not that of decreasing and diminishing because they, as a part of their nature, bestow fecundity and fertility.
8. 6, 61, 13. Here dative seems to be standing for instrumental. Sāyaṇa's rendering '*vibhutvāya kṛtā Prajāpatinā*' is not very apt, though it retains the sense that Prajāpati carved it; but he does not translate *Vibhva* as Prajāpati, he supplies *Prajāpatinā* instrumental for the p.p.p. *kṛtā*. But we refer here to a passage of Ait. Br. (4, 33, 9) where Vibhvan is said as an artifier of Varuṇa. Hence Sarasvatī was fashioned by Vibhvan (an aspect of Prajāpati); this is the most probable meaning of the passage.
9. 7, 96, 1. 10. 7, 95, 2. 11. 2, 41, 16. 12. 7, 36, 6.

13. See Sāyaṇa : *Gaṅgādīnām madhye sindhumātā apām mātṛ bhūtā Sarasvatī*; Veṅkaṭamādhava : *Sindhūnām mātā*; Macdonell, VM, p. 86, 'a mother of streams'. This compound in dual form (i. e., *Sindhumātarā*) is an attribute of the Aśvins in 1, 46, 2 where Sāyaṇa rightly takes it as a *Bahuvrīhi* compound and renders it as *samudra-matṛkau* 'they who have the ocean as their mothers', and *samudrajau*, 'born of ocean'. This compound in plural form (i. e. *Sindhu-mātaraḥ*) again occurs as an attribute of the Martus in 10, 76, 6. There again Sāyaṇa commits a mistake by taking it as *Tatpuruṣa* and thus renders it as *Sindhu-nirmātāraḥ*,'makers of rivers'. But the correct and natural meaning of this Bahuvrīhi compound (as it accentuates its first member) is 'they who have the (celestial) ocean as their mother'. This meaning is natural in the sense that the Maruts being atmospheric deities (Nigh. 5, 5), who are assigned the functions of thunder, rain, etc., are said here as rising from the celestial ocean, the store-house of *dhūma* (vapour), *jyoti* (light) and *salila* (water). etc. Celestial ocean has been referred to many a time by the word *sindhu*. On this count earlier Western Vedic scholars mistook that the Ṛgvedic Aryans were not acquainted to the ocean. But Dr. A. C. Das in his celebrated work—'Ṛgvedic India' has put forth ample information from the ṚV to refute their view.
14. May it be due to the reason of attaching sanctity to the river that it is said as deriving water from heaven or may it be due to the fact that the river of the Ṛgvedic period had been receiving water more from rains than from glaciers because of climatic conditions, as we have observed above. This fact is also hinted at by the appellation of the river Marud-vṛdhā, 'nurtured by the Maruts' (10, 75, 5) which suggests that the river derived its waters from rains. Furthermore, the Maruts (gods mainly connected with the phenomena of thunder and rain) are referred to as causing streams of mountains to pour 5, 59, 7.

Sarasvatī and Āpaḥ (waters)

Āpaḥ (waters) are the terrestrial goddesses[1] who are lauded in separate hymns[2] and detached *ṛcs* mostly occurring in the Viśvedevāḥ prayers in the ṚV. Sarasvatī has been prayed along with them in two significant references; once in a *ṛc* of the hymn sung in their laudation and again in a prayer to the Viśvedevāḥ. In both references Sarasvatī looks as it were a constituent of the Āpaḥ,and it should be counted as such, for,she is a terrestrial river-goddess. In the *ṛc* belonging to the former class (i. e., of the Āpaḥ-hymn), by the side of Āpaḥ, who are said to be wealthy and protectresses of independent riches, controlling treasures, and upholding auspicious actions and *amṛta*, Sarasvatī is prayed to give a long life to the singer[3]. This prayer to Sarasvatī is popular with the worshipper of the Āpaḥ[4]. Such a prayer to Sarasvatī by the side of the Āpaḥ points out that waters of the river-goddess Sarasvatī, too, are remedial by

which they lengthen the span of life of the worshipper. In the *ṛc* belonging to Viśvedevāḥ Sarasvatī, Sarayu and Sindhu seem to have been indentified with the goddesses Āpaḥ and are addressed as mothers and requested to give milk rich in fatness and honey[5]. The epithet *ambitamā*, 'best of mothers' and the vocative *amba*, 'O mother' used for Sarasvatī also indicate her relations with the Āpaḥ who are often mentioned as mothers[6].

1. Nigh. 5, 3; but Macdonell, VM, p. 85 discusses them amongst atmospheric gods.
2. Four hymns (7, 47; 49; 10, 9; 30) belong to them,
3. 10, 30, 12.
4. VM, p. 85 'They (Āpaḥ) are remedial, bestowing remedies and long life, immortality......'.
5. 10, 64. 9.
6. 10, 91, 6; 10, 9, 2, 10, 17, 10; 1, 23, 16; 6, 50, 7.

Sarasvatī and Parjanya

Parjanya is a god of the rain-cloud, regarded as the type of liberal beneficence. In 8, 21, 18 it is said that king Citra and many other kinglings follow Sarasvatī, the exemplar of munificence (as is mentioned in 8, 21, 17) but it is king Citra, who like Parjanya with his rain, has spread himself with myriad gifts. Thus in this *ṛc* the bounteous characteristic of both Sarasvatī and Parjanya is mentioned which is followed so laudably by King Citra and ordinarily by many kinglings.

Sarasvatī and the Pitṛs

In a prayer[1] the goddess Sarasvatī has been reminded by the worshipper that she visited the sacrifice, sitting in a car along with the Pitṛs and rejoicing in their oblation (aforetime)[2];(therefore, at present also) seated on this sacred grass (strewn by the side of the altar) she may be joyful and give the worshippers strengthening food which is devoid of disease. The worship of the Pitṛs had been popular in all the Aryan clans. Their deification is considered to be the most ancient in the Aryan pantheon of gods. Schrader[3] thinks that 'the worship of ancestors' was at the root of development of the concept of divine beings in the Indo-European culture. The reference to the Pitṛs in the present *ṛc* also suggests the antiquity of their worship. The association of Sarasvatī, who is relatively speaking a recent goddess, with the celebrated Pitṛs seems to be a concentrated effort on the part of the seer to attach eminence to the new entrant into the pantheon.

1. 10, 17, 8.

2. The purport of the preceding *ṛc* (10, 17, 7) also suggests that Sarasvatī had been worshipped by the people of the past, she blessed them and, therefore, the devotees of the deities (today) call her (regularly) at the time of spreading sacrifice.
3. Aryan Religion, ERE, II, 14-57.

Sarasvatī and the Viśvedevāḥ

Sarasvatī has been lauded in three separate hymns[1] and a number of detached *ṛcs* mostly occuring in the Viśvedevāḥ prayers. But the Viśvedevāḥ, as divinity of that name, have been mentioned only once[2] in conjunction with Sarasvatī. Viśvedevāḥ, Sarasvatī and others have been requested in this prayer to pay heed to the words (i.e., solicitation) of their worshipper.

1. 6, 61; 7, 95; 96.
2. 10, 65, 13.

Sarasvatī and Soma

There is, perhaps, no reference in the ṚV in which Sarasvatī and Soma are praised or prayed together. Of course, in two *ṛcs*[1] connection of the goddess with Soma is referred to indirectly. In the former, Sarasvatī, as a member of Tisro-devīḥ (the other two being Bhāratī and Iḷā), is requested to visit the sacrifice belonging to Pavamāna (i.e., Soma). Two *phala-mantras*,* viz., 31 and 32, which occur at the end of the *sūkta* 9,67 refer to the merits which are gained by studying hymns pertaining to Pavamāna (Soma). In the first *mantra* the favour of Mātariśvan for a student of *Pāvamānī* hymns is mentioned and in the next Sarasvatī is said as drawing forth water, butter, milk and mead for such a student as reads the hymns pertaining to Pavamāna (Soma), which are but an essence (*rasa*-savour of life) piled up (*sambhṛtam*) by the Ṛṣis.

Dr. Surya Kanta in his paper 'Saras, Soma and Sīra'[2] says *saras* in the word Sarasvatī means Soma and thus establishes a firm closeness between Sarasvatī and Soma.

1. 9, 5, 8; 67, 32.
* *Ṛcs* which impress upon the reader the nature of merits which are likely accrued as a result of the devotion and belief.
2. ABORI, Vol. XXXVIII, Part I—II, pp. 115—39.

Sarasvatī and the Minor Female Divinities

Besides Nadyaḥ and Āpaḥ, Sarasvatī has also been associated with such female divinities as are minor in status when viewed in presence of other deities of the pantheon. In a prayer[1]

female deities alone are invoked for help (*ūtaye*) and well-being (*svastaye*). Besides Sarasvatī, others to whom invocation is made here are Guṅgū, Sinīvālī, Rākā, Indrāṇī and Varuṇānī. With the goddess Sinīvālī, Sarasvatī has been prayed to protect the embryo in first hemistich of a *ṛc*[2] while in the second hemistich of the same *ṛc*, Aśvins have been prayed for a similar gain. Sarasvatī, Bṛhaddivā and Rākā, who are called givers of desiderata (*daśasyantī*) and fair ones (*śubbrāḥ*), are requested to befriend the worshipper[3]. Gnāḥ[4] and Sarasvatī, the two female divinities, are requested to associate themselves with (or accept the sacrifice of) the worshipper by the side of other major gods like Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra, Agni, Pūṣan. etc. In another prayer[5] Sarasvatī, who is said as accordant with the Gnāḥ (*Gnābhir......sajoṣā*), is requested to give the singer unassailable (*durādharṣam*) and flawless (*acchidram*) refuge. Viśvedevāḥ and Sarasvatī, in conjuc- with Dhīs, Puraṁdhi, have been implored to listen to words (of suppliance) of the worshipper[6].

1. 2, 32, 8. Guṅgū is Kuhū, 'the new moon personified' — Sāyaṇa. *Yā (h)*, the pronoun, prefixed here to the first four divinities suggests that they are well-known.
2. 10, 184, 2.
3. 5, 42, 12. Bṛhaddivā is a goddess frequently associated with Iḷā (2, 31, 4) Sarasvatī and others. Sāyaṇa takes it as an epithet meaning 'very brilliant' of Rākā, the goddess who presides over the day of full moon.
4. 5, 46, 2. Gnāḥ are the wives of gods : *Gnāḥ devānāṁ striyaḥ*—Sāyaṇa. Cf. Tvaṣṭṛ. accordant with the Gnāḥ *(Gnābhiḥ sajoṣā)* is requested to speed forth the car of the worshipper—2, 31, 4.
5. 6, 49, 7.
6. 10, 65, 13. While *Dhī* may be taken here as the pious thought deified, Puraṁdhi may be taken as bounty deified. But if we take *dhi* in Puraṁdhi meaning 'artifice', then Puraṁdhi would mean 'deft in artifice', or 'active' 'zealous,' etc. Macdonell (VM, p. 36) points out that once the god Pūṣan has been said as 'Puraṁdhi' in 2, 31, 4, Macdonell wrongly thought that since the bounty of Pūṣan is particularly often mentioned, e.g., in 6, 58, 4 and 8, 4, 18 etc., therefore, '*Puraṁdhi*', as an epithet, would sit well on Pūṣan. Firstly, we should note that when Pūṣan is referred to as bountiful in the above context he is said as *maghavā* (6, 58, 4) or *maṁhiṣṭhaḥ*. Secondly, bounty of many gods, to wit, Indra, Aśvins, Agni, etc.. has been mentioned, therefore, this is not specific to Pūṣan. Thirdly, Puraṁdhi in 2, 31, 4 can also be taken as an appellation of separate deity. may be that of 'Bounty' (i.e. the deified generosity), 'Deftness' or 'Boldness'.

Sarasvatī and Vibhvan

Sarasvatī is referred to as carved by Vibhvan (*vibhvane kṛtā*[1]). As observed above Vibhvan is a divine artificer more probably an aspect of Prajāpati. Sarasvatī's association with Vibhvan is but to give an idea of her divine origin, inasmuch as she has been said to have been fashioned by a divine artificer.

1. 6, 61, 13. Here dative stands for instrumental. Vibhvan seems to be the Chief of the group of the same name, as we meet in 7, 48, 2–'Vibhvan with the Vibhus is invoked'. In the Ait. Br. (4, 33, 9) it is said that Vibhvan was the artificer of Varuṇa.

Sarasvatī and Sarasvat

From a very few *ṛcs* addressed to Sarasvat in the ṚV and comparatively more *ṛcs* in higher panegyrical terms to Sarasvatī, it seems that a counterpart of Sarasvatī was thought of and hence the concept of god Sarasvat might have come into being[1]. Sarasvat has been differntly interpreted as Vāyu, Sūrya and Indra by the scholiasts in different passages[2].

Sarasvat has been classified in the Nighaṇṭu[3] amongst the gods of atmospheric region. The act of *rasānupradāna*, 'shedding rain' is associated with him, though there is no direct or indirect reference which alludes to any of his acts of valiance (*vīra-karma*).

Explaining the epithet *vīra-patnī* of Sarasvatī, Muir[4] trying to improve upon the interpretation of *vīra* as 'Prajāpati' by Sāyaṇa suggests that Sarasvat in preference to Prajāpati be taken as *vīra* here. But, perhaps, it did not occur to the mind of the learned scholar that nowhere in the ṚV has Sarasvat ever been associated with any act of valiance. He as such has no ground to be called *vīra*, 'valiant'.

The fecundating power of Sarasvat is referred to when he is said as the lovely germ (*garbham utpādakam*, Sayāṇa) of waters and that of plants. He delights the worshipper with rain[5]. The billows of Sarasvat (i.e. the raining waters he sheds) are said to be replete with honey and dropping ghee with which he is requested to be the protector of worshippers[6].

The fertility and nourishing nature of waters are often spoken of in the terms like *ghṛta*, *madhu*, *kṣīra*, etc. in the ṚV[7]. In 7, 96, 5 *ghṛtaś-cutaḥ* suggests that Sarasvat sheds water from above. This idea is in perfect apposition to one contained in in *vṛṣṭibhiḥ tarpayantam*[8]. Thus Sarasvat like other atmospheric

deities is conceived as a god shedding rain. On this count one may take the swelling breast of Sarasvat (*pīpivāṁsam Sarasvataḥ stanam*) as the cloud, which is fully beautiful to look at. He is thus an atmospheric god, thought riverine in nature like Sarasvatī in the ṚV.

Sarasvatī has been conceived as a river-goddess by the side of her conception as a goddess of atmospheric region. Similarly, Sarasvat, it seems, has also been conceived as a river-god. He is said to be friendly to men (*naryaḥ*), a potent (male) child amongst women (*yoṣaṇāsu vṛṣā śiśuḥ*). The latter attribute suggests that he is a deified mighty (i. e., swift-moving) rivulet amongst the deified streams and hence styled as *vṛsabho yajñiyāsu*, 'foremost amongst the holy women (i. e., the holy rivers)'[9].

Thus we have seen that Sarasvat is met with in the ṚV in two aspects—(i) as a deity of atmospheric region causing rain to fall and (ii) as a terrestrial rivergod[10].

Some of the functions of Sarasvat and prayers addressed to him correspond to those of Sarasvatī. For example, with his billows Sarasvat is requested to be protector (*avitā*) of the worshipper[11] where as the river-goddess Sarasvatī is said as protectress (*avitrī*)[12] in the same hymn. Sarasvat is associated with *Dhīs*, the deified thoughts or prayers or artifices[13] like Sarasvatī[14]. Sarasvat is prayed like other Vedic gods including Sarasvatī to bestow progeny and food[15], he is invoked for help by the worshipper[16] like Sarasvatī and Indra[17]. The nearness between Sarasvatī and Sarasvat led a commentator to observe that the eulogy of Sarasvat contained in 7, 95 3 is but to propitiate Sarasvatī[18]. Unlike Sarasvatī Sarasvat is called '*divya-suparṇa*', the term applied to the Sun-bird and Viṣṇu's vehicle Garuḍa[19].

He gives a *vājin*[20] to worshippers, for gain (*sātaye*) he decorates the body[21]. An interesting but distinct characteristic of Sarasvat is that he is approached by bachelors who long for wives and by the liberal ones who yearn for male issues[22]. It is difficult to say how the worship of Sarasvat would have become popular amongst the folk of unmarried men yearning for consorts. However, one may surmise that Sarasvat—a hilly rivulet swelled with waters would have been witnessed by people as joining with its own efforts the river Sarasvatī, thought to be its consort. People therefore, took in Sarasvat a quality of

finding his consort soon and at the same time independendently. Thus he would have come to be worshipped by the people pining for finding consorts soon and without being dependent on others.

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1. Yāska (Nir. 10, 24) does not explain the word *Sarasvat* but gives a note: '*Sarasvān vyākhyātaḥ*, 'Sārasvān has been explained'. This note of Yāska suggests that he would have derived Sarasvat also like Sarasvatī from *saras* adding *matup* suffix. Without giving any explanation Yāska quotes one of the three *mantras* of Vasiṣṭha (7, 96, 4-6). Śaunaka giving an etymology of Sarasvat says : *Sarāṁsi ghṛtavantyasya santi lokeṣu yat triṣu/Sarasvantam iti prāha......................../* —Bṛ. Dev. 2, 51, 'Because he has pools replete with ghee in all the three regions, therefore, they (i.e. *Ṛṣis* like Vasiṣṭha) call him Sarasvān.........That is, Śaunaka takes *saras* meaning 'pool' in the word *Sarasvat* while Yāska in Sarasvatī (corresponding feminine of Sarasvat) takes *saras* meaning 'water'.
2. See Sāyaṇa's comm. 1, 164, 52: 'Sarasvat is Sūrya'; 7, 95, 3 : *Madhyamasthāno Vāyuḥ Sarasvān*'; AV 7, 40, 1, (=ṚV 1, 164, 52): *Indra iti viniyogād avagamyate*'.
3. 5, 4. 4. OST., Vol. V, 3rd Ed. Amsterdon, 1967, p.340, note 508.
5. 1, 164, 52. 6. 7, 96, 5. 7. See e.g., 9, 67, 32; 10, 64, 9; etc.
8. 1, 164, 52. 9. 7, 95, 3.
10. K. C. Chattopadhyaya (Ṛgvedic River Sarasvatī, Jour. of the Dept. of Letters, Vol. XV, Calcutta, pp. 18-19 and 42-43) in order to prove that the Sarasvatī is absolutely a terrestrial river, i.e., the Indus (of course he does not anywhere in his paper either acknowledge or refer to her divine analogue, aerial and terrestrial, probably it did not strike him at all), insists on taking Sarasvat too, as a terrestrial god. He refutes the statement of the Nighaṇṭu that Sarasvatī is a god of middle region and disagrees with Sāyaṇa who supports the Nighaṇṭu. According to the opinion of Chattopadhyaya Sarasvatī represents the lower part of the river Sarasvatī (=Indus) after the Kubhā (with Suvastu), the Krumu and other tributaries of the Indus had joined her. In support of his argument that the same stream is called by masculine and feminine terms in different regions, he cites the custom still prevailing in the Panjab calling the two main branches of the Chandrabhāghā river at its head by 'Candrā' and 'Bhāgā', and refers to Tuṅgā and Bhadrā, the two main branches of the Tuṅgabhadrā river and to Maru and Wardvān of the Ṛgvedic Marudvṛdhā. (Such an idea has also been expressed by Sir M.A.Stein, 'River Names in the Ṛgveda', Bhandarkar Comm. Vol. p. 24). In his over-enthusiasm to prove his new theory, he seems to have overlooked that, in the present instance, there are no two main streams of the Indus called Sarasvat and Sarasvatī which later join together to form a single stream as the analogies of Candrabhāgā, Tuṅgabhadrā and Marudvṛdhā would lead one to expect. This

opinion that the narrow river earstwhile called Sarasvatī was styled as Sarasvat after it had been swollen by the tributaries, has no supporting evidence whatsoever. Further, his argument against the godhead of Sarasvat is against the unequivocal evidence of ṚV 1, 164, 52 which he himself appears to admit, p. 18, note 1. He states that the ṚV (10, 66, 5) does not refer to Sarasvat as a mid-air deity. But the very fact, he has been invoked in conjunction with the great celestial gods, such as Varuṇa, Pūṣan, Viṣṇu and others, proves that he, too, is a celestial god. Chattopadhyaya fears "if Sarasvat is classed with Vāyu and other gods of the middle region, Sarasvatī too is so called." Strange logic indeed. "As Sarasvatī in 7, 95 and 7, 96", he continues, "is a river and not a Madhyamasthānā devatā Sarasvat too of the same hymns should not belong to the middle region", pp. 18-19. But it seems clearly that 7, 95, 6 alludes to the celestial character of Sarasvatī. Besides, in both these hymns (7, 95 and 96) she is invoked for opulence and food and is offered oblations. This shows that the Ṛṣi in these hymns describes a divine Sarasvatī rather than an earthly one. Thus we may not discard the Naighaṇṭuka view that Sarasvat is an atmospheric deity. Even when he seems to be a river, he carries divine character and is thus to be taken as a terrestrial river-god also.

11. 7, 96, 5. 12. 7, 96, 2. 13. 10, 65, 5. 14. 7, 35, 11; 10, 65, 13.
15. 7, 96, 6. The prayer *bhakṣīmahi prajāmiṣam*, 'may we gain progeny and food' is also made to Soma–9, 8, 9.
16. 1, 164, 52. 17. 6, 52, 6.
18. See Sāyaṇa's comm.
19. 1, 164, 52; VM. p. 39. Sāyaṇa, Śaunaka and Sarvānukramaṇī refer to this *ṛc* as pertaining to god sun. Bṛ. Dev. reads—*Saurī vāntyā Sarasvatī* and Sarvānukramaṇī reads—*antyā Sarasvatī Sūryāya vā*.
20. 'Steed', Griffith; 'male issue',—Sāyaṇa; lit. 'one possessed of food or vigour (*vāja*)'.
21. Though Sarasvat being conceived as a deity of atmospheric region can be well thought of as extending succour in battle, as Griffirh takes, but here the root *san*, 'to gain', 'to secure (for one self or for another)' in *sātaye*, is mostly used in connection with those concepts or entities which are essential for the continuation of human life on earth. See, e. g., Indra is stated to have secured the sun, the divine water, the earth, the sky, the steeds, the cow and gold (3, 34, 8; 9); Soma wins the sun (9, 76, 2), water, dawn, sun, the cows (9, 90, 4; 74, 1); man's life may be the object (10, 97, 5). Thus *sāti*, 'gain', is a wider term and may not be shrunken to convey merely the meaning of 'success in battle'. 22. 7, 96, 4.

Sarasvatī and Other Two Members of the Triad of Goddesses*

Sarasvatī is a member of the Vedic triad of goddesses and she is invoked with Iḷā and Bhāratī, the other two members of the

* *Ṛcs* pertaining to the Triad of Goddesses which have some bearing on the person of Sarasvatī only have been taken up here for study.

triad, to be seated on the sacred grass strewn by the side of altar in sacrifice[1]. In another prayer they are requested to protect the sacred grass (i. e., *yajña*), flawlessly, of the worshipper and here out of three goddesses Sarasvatī's function of perfecting *dhī* alone is mentioned[2]. All the three are invoked by name by the worshipper and are requested to inspire for (the attainment of) glory[3]. All the three goddesses have been said as *svapasaḥ*, 'good artificers' or 'much agile'[4], *yajñiyāḥ*, 'worthy to be offered sacrifice'[5], *mayobhuvaḥ*, 'who bring delight' and *asridhaḥ*, 'who do not decay'[6]. Mahī in these *ṛcs* is sometimes applied as an epithet of Sarasvatī[7], sometimes Mahī appears as the third member of the triad, the other two being Sarasvatī and Iḷā[8].

At one place[9] Agni is equated with each goddess of the triad. All the three goddesses are conceived as being associated with gods, probably, subordinate to them, and are requested to be seated on the sacred grass along with those subordinate deities[10].

Viśvatūrtī[11], 'pervading everywhere' and '*Hotrā Bhāratī*'[12], 'a sacrificial entity of the Bharatas', mentioned along with the Tisro-devīḥ, seem to be forms of Agni i. e., Sacrificial Fire. Hence the other members of the triad may also be taken as Agni. The fire first kindled in the region of Sarasvatī was called by that name. Bhāratī is thus the Fire of the Bharatas, a renowned clan of the ancient sacrifice-loving Aryans, who afterwards became so advanced and powerful as to give their name to the whole country which has since been called Bhāratavarṣa. A third name of Agni is Iḷā, derived from the region in which the great Manu performed his penance and sacrifices, and which, accordingly, came to be regarded as his spiritual preceptress[13]. Iḷā has been described as the daughter of Dakṣa, one of the creators in the Vedic pantheon, and identified with a region which was one of the best regions known to the ancient Aryans[14]. It would thus appear that these three goddesses were sacrificial Fires which were called after the names of the regions in which they had first been kindled. Since they have invariably been mentioned together in the ṚV, it seems that Iḷā, Bhāratī and Sarasvatī must have been contiguous regions. In 3, 23, 4 the sacrificial fire Iḷā is invoked to burn auspiciously in homes of Aryans living on banks of the Sarasvatī, the Dṛṣadvatī and the Āpayā, and to bring as much prosperity to them as to the Aryans living in Iḷā. We may thus need not labour much to identify

them with *Vāks* of different regions. Speaking on rational grounds, they are sacrificial Fires that are terrestrial in every respect[15]. It has been suggested that Sarasvatī, Iḷā and Bhāratī constitute a triad which is a prototype of later Hindu triad of Sarasvatī, Durgā and Lakṣmī, because in later literature, Iḍā (=Iḷā) is an epithet of Durgā, and Lakṣmī, too, can be identified with the Vedic Bhāratī, (Bhāratī being the wife of Bharata Āditya *Bharataḥ Ādityaḥ/Tasya bhāḥ, Nir. 8, 13,* and Viṣṇu being the Āditya par excellence[16]). But this suggestion does not seem to be a sound one. From the study of the development of the concept of Lakṣmī it seems that she has her own historical background[17]. Secondly, if Iḍā (Iḷā) is a name of Durgā, it cannot help to identify the former with the latter because Durgā when conceived as mother-goddess came to be identified with a number of divinities[18]. Besides, Durgā also has a background separate from Iḍā (Iḷā) since Ṛgvedic times. Thirdly, Sarasvatī and Bhāratī in later literature are synonymous and not Lakṣmī and Bhāratī. Therefore, we may say here at the most that out of the Vedic triad (of Sarasvatī, Iḷā and Bhāratī) Sarasvatī with a dominating personality amalgamated with her the close-knit person of the goddess Bhāratī[19]. Beside that other members of this ancient triad could not evolve myths around their persons, Sarasvatī could do the same and thus gained popularity in post-Vedic literature also[20]. But on second thoughts, we must say that it is not Sarasvatī, a member of the Tisro-Devīḥ (i.e., Sarasvatī, the sacrificial Fire) who had a conceptual development afterwards, it was undoubtedly Vedic Sarasvatī with a riverine character who went through a phased development of her person. Thus the pesonality of Sarasvatī, the sacrificial Fire, became exitinct like that of Iḷā and Bhāratī—the two other sacrificial Fires with the withering away of Vedic ritualism[21].

1. 10, 110, 8; 1, 13, 9; 1, 142, 9. 2. 2, 3, 8, 3. 1, 188, 8.
4. 10, 110, 8. 5. 1, 142, 9. 6. 1, 13, 9 (=5, 5, 8) 7. See, e. g., 1, 142, 9. 8. See, e. g., 1, 13, 9. 9. 2, 1, 11.
10. 3, 4, 8=7, 2, 8. Cf. Veṅkaṭamādhava's comm. who says : *Bhāratī Bhāratībhiḥ svānucarībhiḥ sahitā......Sarasvatī ca svānucarair devagaṇaiḥ...... ā...sīdantu.* Sāyaṇa adds that the deities related to Bhāratī are the goddesses related to Sūrya and the Sārasvatas here are the gods related to the atmospheric region. The Tisroh–devīḥ are classified amongst the terrestrial deities in the Nighaṇṭu (6, 2); two members of the traid Iḷā and Sarasvatī individually are placed in the atmospheric region (5, 5). Bhāratī the third member is a mere synonym of Vāk and not included in the list of deities. When Tisro-devīḥ were allocated to three regions individually by the scholiasts, Sarasvatī was thought of in the atmospheric region, while Bhāratī in the celestial region and Iḷā in the terrestrial region, Bṛ. Dev., 3, 13. Yāska (8, 13) explaining Bhāratī as 'lustre of Ādityā' *Bharataḥ Ādityaḥ/Tasya bhāḥ/* —hints at the celestial abode of Bhāratī. Explaining 2, 1, 11 Sāyaṇa again associates Bhāratī with celestial region, Sarasvatī with atmospheric and Iḷā with terrestrial region.
11. 2, 3, 8. 12. 1, 142, 9. Sayaṇa : Bhāratī is a celestial Vāk. Also Cf. Bṛ. Dev. 3, 12—14. 13. 1, 31, 11. 14. 3, 23, 4.
15. We do not intend here to go into detailed discussion of their identification or their emergence as sacrificial goddesses. For different views of modern scholars refer to SBE Vol. XLVI, Part–II p. 11, 12 and 156.
16. Dr. P. L. Bhargava, India in the Vedic Age, Upper India Publishing House, Lucknow, 1956, p. 177.
17. See Govind Chandra, Rai : Prācina Bhārata meṅ Lakṣmi Pratimā, passim. 18. See Durgāsaptaśatī passim.
19. In some passages where all goddesses are prayed to, it is seen that Sarasvatī is only conspicuous by her presence while the other two are missing; cf. 2, 32, 8; 5, 42, 12.
20. Popularity of gods depends on 'the extent of mythology, they inspire' : Renou, Religions of India, University of London, 1953, p. 22.
21. Vedic sacrificies continued to be performed but they were not Vedic in character because they did not conform to the canons of Vedic ritualism.

Sarasvatī and Vāk*

The identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk was effected in later Vedic literature, but scholiasts, as we have seen above, erroneously identify her with Vāk even in the ṚV. When we study characteristics of both Vāk and Sarasvatī in the ṚV, we observe that there is no such characteristic as is common to both or which is exclusively borne by them. For example, water is the generative force which both these goddesses possess[1]. But almost all atmospheric deities are associated with the act of shedding rain. The other main characteristic of the atmosheric deity *balakṛti*, 'act of valiance' is also possessed by both of them[2]. But the character of each Vedic god is combined with

* I have dealt with their relationship in detail in my paper-Vāk a deity in the Ṛgveda, submitted at the XXIII session of AIOC, Aligarh, 1969.

a number of such features as are common to many other gods[8]. Thus this commonness cannot lead us to identify them with each other.

Besides, the personality of Vāk in the ṚV essentially stands distinct from Sarasvatī. The goddess Vāk is seen in two forms in the ṚV. Firstly, Vāk is Speech originated by the side of the sacrifice by sagacious seers. In the form of *mantras*, she was delivered to them by Bṛhaspati[4]. The younger Ṛṣis performed penance to have a close look on her person when they found her as abiding with elder Ṛṣis[5]. This Vāk is the Holy Order, the Knowledge personified[6], whose abode is the person of a peerless seer[7]. Vāk is the first of all creations of Holy Order[8]. Secondly, Vāk is the atmospheric Speech. Attached firmly to the gods Indra and the Maruts, she roams about in seclusion[9]. Vāk, the Queen of gods, gladdens the worshipper by shedding rain for their welfare like a milch cow when attended upon[10]. Gods generated Vāk, probably when conversing secretly with one another. In other words whisper ing of the gods in heaven, which is not comprehended by man of this mundane sphere, is what is styled as Vāk, the atmospheric Speech, Thunder. The voice of Heaven is the source of speech of all types of animals[11].

Vāk is first of those who merit worship. Gods have established her in many places. Approached by them for shelter, she provides homes to enter in[12]. All actions such as feeding, breathing, speaking and hearing are stimulated by Vāk. They dwindle who do not cognise her. She only declaims the truth. She, verily, speaks of that abode whom gods and men desire alike. She makes a man mighty, and a Brāhmaṇa a Ṛṣi, an intellectual whom she loves[13]. She is the creator of the sky. Her abode is in waters, in the ocean[14] and thence she extends over all creatures and touches even heaven with her tall stature. Whenever she creates all worlds, she alone wanders like the wind. In her grandeur she has surpassed Heaven and Earth[15].

Thus nowhere in the ṚV do we find any occasion to identify Sarasvatī with Vāk. Even in 1, 164, 49 there is no ground to take Sarasvatī as standing for Vāk. The *ṛc* is essentially a prayer to the goddess Sarasvatī to bestow on worshippers her breast that is exhaustless *(śaśayaḥ)* spring of pleasure with which

she feeds all best things, which is the giver of wealth, finder of Vasus, and rich-giver (*su-datraḥ*).

Hence Sarasvatī's association with other divinities indirectly alludes to the fact that most of the major divinities as well as minor ones have grown on the banks of the river, which thus appears to have been an active witness of the evolution and growth of divinities through the medium of sacrifice.

1. For Vāk's characteristics of *rasānupradāna*, 'shedding rain', refer to 8, 100, 10. About Sarasvatī we have discussed above vide supra p. 9f.
2. Vāk bends the bow for Rudra so that his arrow may strike and slay detractor, the hater of devotion. She fights in the cause of (worshipful) people (10, 125, 6).
3. See VM. p. 15, 4. 10, 71, 1. 5. 10, 71, 3; 8, 100, 9.
6. This form of Vāk is explained in some detail in 10, 71.
7. 1, 164, 35. 8. Ibid., 37. 9. 1, 167, 3. 10. 8, 100, 10.
11. Ibid., II; the word *paśu* here includes the man also who is chief among the bipeds ŚBr. 6, 2, 1, 18; 7, 5, 2, 6.
12. Cf. 10, 125, 3.
13. 10, 125, 5. 14. Ibid., 7. 15. Ibid., 8.
16. Cf. Dr. K. R. Potdar, Āpri Hymns in the ṚV, Jour. of Bombay Univ. Vol. XIV, 1945, p. 242.

Epithets, Attributes and a few functions * of Sarasvatī

Epithets and attributes help much to bring about the characteristic features of a deity. There is a good number of epithets and attributes of Sarasvatī in the ṚV which throw ample light on the Vedic concept of the goddess[1]. No Vedic deity has been represented as independent of the other members of the pantheon. Their closeness towards one another results in attributes peculiar to one god attaching themselves to others. Sarasvatī, too, bears a few attributes of such type, i. e., those which are characteristically borne by other gods.

We have seen above the various aspects of the goddess and discussed a good number of her epithets etc. Avoiding repetition, we shall discuss below the remaining epithets, etc., of the goddess or cast some fresh light on those already discussed. Without any classification, they are being discussed in the order of *maṇḍala*, *sūkta* and *mantra* :

* A few functions which are close in their nature and exent to the attributes of the goddess have been included here in this discussion.

Pāvakā 'one who purifies' (1, 3, 10), discussed above. Sarasvatī, the river-goddess, purifies her worshipper from within and without[2].

Vājebhir vājinīvatī and Vājeṣu vājin, 'possesed of vigour on account of food' 'rich in food or abundant in steeds' and 'possessed of vigour or army in battles' (1,3.10; 2,41,18;6,61, 3;4; 7,96,3; 6, 61, 6). The epithet *Vājinīvatī* is often borne by Uṣas[3], though it is also borne by another river-goddess and at least once by the Aśvins[4]. In word *vājinīvatī*, we get the usage of two possessive suffixes—*in*< *ini* and *matup*>*vat*. They make the formation of the word rather curious.. Hence Skandasvāmī explaining the word says : *Vājaḥ* (Nigh. 2, 7) *ity anna nāma vājinī śabdospi tasyaiva paryāyānatram draṣṭavyam/......annair annavatī/* (*anna* is *havir-lakṣnādi*) Yāska also explains the word as *annavatī* (Nir. 12, 6). Skandasvāmī, apparently to avoid the monotonous a repetition of the idea contained in the words *vājebhir vājinīvati* (1, 3, 10), suggests : *yuktam* should be understood after *vājebhir*, for, it is suggested by the instrumental form of the word, (and thus may not be connected with *vājinīvatī*)' and then *vājinīvatī* may be explained as either 'possesssing an army'[5] or 'possessing the paraphernalia of sacrifice'[6]. Texts of the *mantras* mentioning the river-goddess suggest, that we may not take *vāja* in *vājinīvatī* for 'battle' or 'contest. For, we see that other divinities[8] also, interested like Sarasvatī in man's welfare, are very often invoked to confer their favours, consisting in *vāja* which is often attended by such much-desired entities as wealth, possessions, refreshing drinks, plenty of food, sons, cattle, welfare. Sarasvatī herself is requested to promote and give *vāja-s* to the worshipper : *Vardha śubhre stuvate rāsi vājān......*[9] The combined sense of the attribute *vājebhir vājinīvatī* seems to be corresponding to : *kṣayan vājaiḥ*, 'ruling over, or a master of *vāja-s*', said about Agni[10] and *vājānām patiḥ*, 'lord of *vāja-s*', said about Soma[11] and Pūṣan[12], and *vājānām vṛdhaḥ* 'promoter of *vāja-s*', said about Pūṣan,[13]

Here we do not rule out that the sense of *bala*, 'power', is not signified by the word *vāja*, and thought it may not be present in the word *vājinīvatī* as Skandasvāmī takes, yet, when Sarasvatī is addressed *Vājeṣu vājini*' and asked to bestow booty (*sani*)[14], we may unmistakably take the goddess as possessed of *bala*, 'vigour' or *senā*, 'army'. That is, we may say that *vājebhir vājinivatī* and *vājinīvatī* convey that the goddess is rich in *vāja* i. e., she possessess in abundance the power manifesting in vegetative life, food, strength, potency, vigour, etc., and *vājeṣu vājinī* suggests that she is possessed of vigour or army in battles.

But if we take *vājin* denoting steed[15](a), *vājinivatī* would mean 'possessed of steeds', that is, land watered by the Sarasvatī was considered rich in steeds. This view finds force from the fact that the Sarasvatī was a haunt of warriors of rank. They might have found best species of quality steeds on the banks of Sarasvatī, therefore, they styled Sarasvatī *vājinīvatī*, 'possessed of *vājins*'.

Dhiyāvasu, 'rich in devotion' (1, 3, 10). *Dhī* according to Nigh. is 'action' (2, 1) and 'wisdom' (3, 9). It denotes *karma* in its wider sense[16]. *Dhī* in the Ṛgvedic passages may mean *śilpi-karma*, 'artifice', *stuti-karma* 'eulogy' or *yajña-karma* 'sacrifice'. Yāska's rendering of the word *dhiyāvasu* as *karmavasu* is too general to be understood in right perspective, because '*karma*' itself is quite a wide term and supplying *karma* as synonym for *dhī* is insufficient for conveying the underlying sense of the word Sāyaṇa has explained the word differently in various contexts[18], which does not in any way, differ from that of Yāska. Skandasvāmī interprets the word as follows : *Prajñā-dhanā athavā vaser ācchādanārthasya vasuśabdaḥ/Prajñayāsscchādayitrī sarvārthānām*, i. e., rich because of her intellect or *vasu*, may be derived from the root *vas*, 'to cover' (then it would mean) 'one who covers all the meanings by her intellect'. Veṇkaṭamādhava explains it as *prajñayā sarveṣām vāsayitrī* which corresponds to the sense conveyed by the second meaning of Skandasvāmī. Dr. Sarup translates the word as 'rich in devotion'[19]. We have recorded above various interpretations of different scholiasts to show that they are not very appropriate, for they fail to hit at the correct meaning latent in the word *dhiyāvasu*.

Before we dwell on the meaning of the word which is nearest to its correct sense, we shall point out here that *dhiyāvasu* is not an exclusive epithet of the goddess Sarasvatī. Agni, Indra, and Soma are also styled as *dhiyāvasu*; however, Agni amongst them bears this epithet very often. It will not be incorrect, if we say that it is an epithet which is more or less specific to Agni because the refrain—*prātar makṣu dhiyāvasur jagamyāt* occurs in several prayers to Agni[20]. This refrain of the eulogies of Agni is also applied in prayers to Indra add Soma[21]. Sāyaṇa interprets this prayer as follows : *prātaḥ makṣu śīghram karmaṇā*

budhyā vā prāptadhanoꞩgniḥ jagamyāt āgacchatu, 'Agni, who has secured wealth because of his actions or intellect may come soon in the morning'. The rendering of Sāyaṇa of the epithet *dhiyāvasu* does not fit well into the context. Though his interpretation speaks of the magnanimity of the god yet it does not dwell on the underlying belief or devotion of the worshipper contained therein. *Dhiyāvasu* in the context should be interpreted as *dhiyā (asmākaṁ) stutikarmaṇā vasu yasya pārśve bhavati, ātmānaṁ vasumantaṁ manyate*, i. e., 'who because of our eulogy possesses wealth or in other words who thinks himself as wealthy because of our eulogy. This idea, indeed, is at the bottom in the prayer and *dhiyāvasu* thus conveys the sense that the god prizes our *stuti* 'devotional song' (addressed to him) as his riches, that is, responds or rewards us for the eulogies made to him. (This idea is quite popular in the Ṛgvedic prayers). Again when it is said about Agni : *devebhir Agnir iṣito dhiyāvasuḥ*[22], we would see that the characteristic of the god being compassionate in the context will be made manifest only if we translate *dhiyāvasu* as 'one who is (or feels himself) rich because of our eulogy (made to him) or because of his eulogy (made by us)'.

Now in the case of Sarasvatī also we shall translate *dhiyāvasu* as above, because our interpretation of the word contains an appeal to the compassion of the deity, which fits in very well with *yajñaṁ vaṣṭu*, 'may she accept our sacrifice'; who ? one that prizes our *stuti* 'devotional song', as her wealth (*dhiyāvasu*) that is one who has due regard to our eulogies made to her for acquiring various boons and benefits.

Codayitrī-sūnṛtānām, 'impeller of truthful speech' (1, 3, 11). We have already observed[23] that since the river-goddess Sarasvatī provided protection to Aryan tribes and helped them carry out their rituals uninterruptedly by the revilers of gods at home and aliens abroad, she was conceived as the real impeller of the *sūnṛtā-s*, the pleasant and truthful speech, the Vedic prayers, etc. We do not see that the sense of *sūnṛtā* here is different from what is conveyed by *dhi*. This act of impelling speech is characteristic to other Vedic gods also[24]. *Sūnṛta* here may also be taken as standing in contrast to *anṛta*, 'falsehood'. In fact, Vedic gods in general are said to be the furtherers of truth[25]. If Sarasvatī is the impeller of pleasant and truthful speech, Uṣās is *sunṛtāvatī*, 'possessed of pleasant and truthful speech'[26]. Soma

promotes truth and destroys falsehood[17]. Thus this epithet does not show any exclusive characteristic of Sarasvatī and may not be thus pressed into service to prove her a *jñāna-devatā*, 'the goddess of learning or knowledge'.

Cetantī sumatīnām, 'inspirer of noble thoughts' (1, 3, 11).
Though Sāyaṇa and Skandasvāmī translate *sumati* here as *anuṣṭhātṛ* and *yajamāna* i. e., sacrificer but in the context of the preceding attribute of Sarasvatī it would be more appropriate to translate *sumati* here as *śobhanā* or *śubhā-mati*, i. e., 'noble thought'. Like the one discussed above, this attribute also of Sarasvatī does not make her a goddess of knowledge or learning. In addition to it, the prayer that follows these two attributes clearly points out that Sarasvatī is requested here to protect the sacrifice, therefore, *sunṛtā* and *sumati* should be translated preferably in the context of *yajña*, i. e., both *sunṛtā* and *sumati* broadly speaking stand for 'speech', 'the Vedic *mantras*' which Soma and other gods, as we have seen above, are said to incite among their worshippers.

Subhagā, 'beautiful, fortunate' (1, 89, 3). It is an epithet which has been applied to Sarasvatī several times[29]. It is also applied to river-goddess Vipāṭ[30] and to another river-goddess[31]. It is perhaps the most ancient and general epithet of a Vedic deity, because on the basis of corresponding Slavonic 'bogu' and Persian 'bagha' (for Skt. 'bhaga') which mean a mere 'god', we understand that a correspondence of the Skt. word 'subhagā' would have been a general epithet of a goddess in the Indo-European pantheon.

Sādhayantī dhiyaṁ naḥ, 'perfecting our *dhī*, *stutikarma* or *yajñakarma* (2,3, 8). Since Sarasvatī is spoken here as one of the *Tisrodeviḥ*, 'the Trio of goddesses' she, in all probability, is Agni and thus *dhī* may preferably be translated here as 'prayer', 'sacrifice' rather than as *buddhi*, 'intellect', as Sāyaṇa does.

Marudvatī, 'possessed of the Maruts', 'associate of the Maruts' (2, 30, 8). It has been discussed above.[32]

Dhṛṣatī, 'brave', 'inflicting injury' (2,30,8). It has been discussed above[33].

Ambitamā, 'best of mothers' (2, 41, 16). It has been discussed above[33], This epihet of Sarasvatī corresponds to the *matṛtamā*– an epithet of another river–goddess namely Vipāṭ[34]. Rivers and

Waters are often mentioned as mothers[35] for they bestow on the worshipper a most vital constituent of life, water. It is perhaps for their motherly characteristic that their water and milk of the mother/cow are known by the same name *payas*.

Nadītamā, 'best of rivers' (2, 41, 16). It is an exclusive epithet which is applied to Sarasvatī. Sarasvatī has been spoken of in other superlative terms like *priyatamā*, 'most lovely'[36], which speaks of the indulgence of the devotee towards his worshippable deity, and *devitamā*, 'best of goddesses[37]', which speaks of the rank that Sarasvatī enjoyed amongst the goddessess. The latter is an epithet exclusively borne by Sarasvatī in the whole of Vedic literature. The idea of her being peerless is also suggested by her epithets *uttarā* (i.e. *uttarā sakhībhyaḥ*), 'better than her other companions'[38], *nadīnām śuciḥ*, 'immaculate amongst streams', *mahinā sindhur anyā*, 'surpassing in majesty all other rivers'[40], *dyumnebhir anyā*, 'surpassing others by her glories[41]', *asuryā nadīnām*, 'mighty amongst rivers'[42], and *apsām apastamā*, 'swiftest amongst the swift ones[43]'. All these epithets show that the eulogizer has in his mind that Sarasvatī is most puissant amongst rivers. Though the Vedic Ṛṣis are acquainted with a number of rivers including the Sindhu and the Gaṅgā, they speak of the Sarasvatī alone in such high terms as we have seen above.

Ṛtāvarī, 'possessed of water', 'observer of divine order' (2, 41,18; 6, 61, 9). *Ṛta* is a 'divine law', 'eternal law', 'cosmic order', like that of sunrise and sunset and *varī* is a feminine of the suffix '*van*'. This epithet in masculine is applied to Agni (singular number)[44] and also to the Aśvins (in dual number)[45]. Usually it has been applied to the female divinities like Aditi[46] (in singular number). Dyāvā-pṛthivī[47] and Rodasī[48] (in dual number), the Dawns[49] and the Rivers[50] (in plural number).

Almost all gods are associated with *ṛta* in one or another way as Greek and Roman gods are linked with Fate (Moria, Fatum)[51]. The relation which the gods sustain to *ṛta* is variously stated[52]. The *devas* each in his own proper sphere, are *ṛta*, express *ṛta*, are the guardians and cherishers of *ṛta*[53]. Sarasvatī, and all the river-goddesses also are thus said as *ṛtāvarīḥ* 'observers of divine-law, the cosmic order'. 'Flowing of water' is itself a *ṛta* and corresponds to the concept of *ṛta* as is expressed by the daily recurrence of dawn[54].

Yajatā : 'worthy of sacrifice or adoration', 'worshipful'[55].

Havaṁ jujuṣāṇā, 'listening to our invocation' (5. 43, 11 =7, 24, 3). This epithet speaks of the responsive nature of the goddess.

Ghṛtācī, 'abounding in water', 'shining with ghee', 'sprinkling ghee or water' (5, 43, 11=7, 24, 3); Sāyaṇa translates the word as *ghṛtam añcati*, 'bending water in spiral form', 'curling warter'.

Śagmāṁ no vācam uśatī, 'fond of our pleasing praise' (5, 43, 11=7, 24, 3). It shows that the goddess on her own part does not expect that people may upbraid her for ruins thrusted upon them by her mighty waves but she pines for a pleasing praise for her previous and ensuing responsive attitude.

Pāvīravī, 'possessing a weapon', 'carrying a *vajra*, thunderbolt' (6, 49, 7; 10, 65, 13). Sarasvatī is thought of as a goddess of the aerial region, therefore, she was conceived as carrying a thunderbolt as her weapon[56]. Yāska translates it as *divyā vāk*. 'celestial speech'[57]. But his etymological explanation- *Paviḥ* (Nigh. 2, 20) *śalyaḥ bhavati/Yat vipunāti kāyam / Tadvat pavīram āyudham/tadvān Indraḥ pavīravān/*-suggests that *āyudhavatī*[58] Sarasvatī be linked with *pavīravān*[59] Indra, and should preferably be taken as *Mādhyamikā devatā*. It should not be identified with atmospheric Vāk, as we have observed above. 'Possessing a weapon' is itself suggestive of her place amongst the aerial gods.

Citrāyuḥ, 'possessed of wonderful vitality' (6, 49, 7). It is an epithet borne exclusively by Sarasvatī. Out of two plausible interpretations of Sāyaṇa for this word as *citragamanā*, 'of wonderful gait' *citrānnā*, 'possessed of diverse food', the latter is to be preferred because it refers to more effective and natural quality of the goddess associated with fecundity and fertility. Griffith's translation of *citrāyuḥ* as 'brisk with rare life' is also convincing in the light of modern recent researches. Geological evidence has confirmed that the Śivālaka range of the Himālaya was one of those ancient lands which were inhabited by human beings in hoary antiquity[60].

Kanyā, 'virgin', 'beautiful' (6, 49, 7). Griffith takes *pāvīravīkanyā* as one word without any solid ground. Sāyaṇa translates *kanyā* as *kamanīyā*, 'beautiful', which is quite right so far as the original meaning of the word indicates. But *kanyā* may also mean 'a virgin', the epithet translated as such would bespeak a number of suggestive qualities of the goddess. The presence of her other epithet *vīrapatnī* in the same hemistich of the *ṛc* does

not prevent us from translating *kanyā* as 'virgin' because *patnī* should not mean here 'a consort' but 'a protectress'.

Vīrapatnī, 'protectress of a hero or heroes' (6, 49 7). It has been discussed above[61]. Sāyaṇa translates it as 'the consort of *Vīra* i. e. Prajāpati' and also as 'the protectress of the heroes'. The latter one is more plausible in the context. But *vīra* is somewhat a specific epithet of Indra, though the Maruts are said as *vīrāḥ*[62]. Sarasvatī's role as 'protectress of Indra' is quite manifest[63], therefore, she may be taken as 'the protectress of *vīra* i. e. Indra'. Muir[64] suggests here that Sarasvat should be substituted for *vīra* and not Prajāpati. But it did not, perhapes, occur to the mind of the learned scholar that nowhere in the ṚV has Sarasvat been ever associated with any act of valiance.

Sindhubhiḥ pinvamānā, 'swelling with the (celestial) rivers' (6, 52, 6). It has been discussed above[65].

Pāravataghnī, 'killer of the Pārāvatas' (6, 61, 2). It has been discussed above[66].

Dhīnām avitrī, 'protectress of prayers' (6, 61, 4). It has been discussed below[66 (a)].

Ghorā, 'fierce' (6, 61, 7). Sarasvatī in her terrestrial and atmospheric forms is *ghorā*, 'terrific, dreadful' like Indra who is characteristically said as *ghora*, 'fierce'[67].

Hiraṇyavartini, 'having a golden path' (6, 61, 7). It has been discussed above[68]. Sāyaṇa explains *vartini* as chariot and the compound as meaning 'having a golden chariot'. This meaning does not seem to be correct. The words *rudra-vartini*[69], 'one whose path is dreadful' and *ghṛta-vartini*[70], 'one whose path is unctuous', are also applied to different deities in the ṚV. *Kṛṣṇa-vartini*—'he whose path is marked by blackness' is an epithet of Agni[71] and the sense of that term is fixed by the use of the synonym *kṛṣṇādhvan*. Thus, in the context of the river-goddess Sarasvatī also, *vartini* should be translated as 'path' and not 'chariot'[72].

Vṛtraghnī, 'killer of Vṛtra', 'killer of enemies' (6, 61, 7). It has been discussed above[73]. Killing Vṛtra was the most perilous act, all gods helped Indra in its accomplishment. The association of other gods in this enterprise is but to enhance the prestige and pre-eminence of their person, otherwise the most frequent reference to Indra against Vṛtra has ample reason to believe that it was Indra alone who accomplished this onerous

act. Similarly Sarasvatī also has been said to be contributing her mite to smite Vṛtra. She is, therefore, said as Vṛtraghnī. Though Vṛtra does represent an abstract idea of obstruction,[74] it will not be correct to say here 'since the river Sarasvatī cleared off the obstructions in its path to flow on, she is said as Vṛtraghnī'. Vṛtra is 'obstruction' but, in its most popular sense, is that obstruction which has stemmed the rivers to flow[75]. Therefore, Vṛtra should mean in our context the famous foe of Indra or at the most 'enemy' in general.

Sapta-Svasā, 'seven sistered' (6, 61, 10). Sarasvatī, the river-goddess has been said here as 'seven-sistered' and again as 'seven-fold' (*sapta-dhātu*)[76] but she is also said to be 'seventh', i.e., 'one of the seven rivers' (*saptathī*)[77]. At another place Sarasvatī is again mentioned separately from the Sapta-Sindhavaḥ[78]. In this context it has been observed by Macdonell and Keith[79] that the connection of Sarasvatī with the seven rivers is rather vague because from *Saptathī* she seems to be a constituent of the seven rivers and from *Sapta-svasā* she seems to be execluded from the system of the seven-rivers. Let us see what the word *sapta-svasā* signifies and what is the relation of Sarasvatī with the Sapta-sindhavaḥ.

First of all, the association of number seven with Sarasvatī seems to be mystic in character. The association with the mystic number seven is very popular in the ṚV[80] and we may not insist on here reading the reference essentially to the seven rivers. Skandasvāmī[81] and Sāyaṇa interpret the word *sapta-svasā* as not referring to terrestrial rivers, the Sapta-Sindhavaḥ. Skandasvāmī's interpretation and that of Sāyaṇa that the reference here is made to seven metres, Gāyatrī and the like show that the scholiasts, too, read that a reference here to the mystic number seven is made; Skandasvāmī in particular does not see here any reference to the geographical data.

However, if we take that the reference here is made to the terrestrial river-goddesses we may observe that Sarasvatī is spoken of in two ways (i) as a separate river from the system of seven-rivers, (ii) as one of the system of seven rivers. When Sarasvatī is said to be 'seven-sistered', it may be taken that she has five rivers of the Punjab, Sindhu and Kubhā as her sisters. That is why she is mentioned separately from the Sapta-Sindhavaḥ in the ṚV[82] and Avestā[83]. Actually the system of seven-

rivers is not essentially five rivers of the Panjab, Sindhu or another river Kubhā, Haraihvātī or Sarasvatī. In 10,75, 5 we notice that the system of the seven main rivers is not the one that is popularly taken to be Sapta-sindhavaḥ. Thus we need not corroborate the view of Macdonell and Keith that the relation of the Sarasvatī with the Sapta-sindhavaḥ is vague, because 'Sapta-sindhavaḥ' is itself such a term which does not speak of any specific system of rivers but it can be applied to any system of seven rivers[84]. That is, this concept of Sapta-sindhavaḥ has been changing from time to time[85].

Thus we may conclude that the Sarasvatī is mentioned with two systems of rivers in the ṚV. With the older system of the seven rivers, it has a sisterly relation and it is not one of the seven rivers and it is one of the rivers of the new system which is mentioned in 10, 75, 5.

Sapta-dhātu, 'seven fold' (6, 61, 12). This epithet also shows that Sarasvatī is possessed of seven limbs, i.e., seven streams of the old system are closely related to her[86].

Ā-paprusī, 'pervading every where' (6, 61,11).It has been discussed above[87].

Triṣadhasthā 'having three seats' (6, 61, 6). It is an epithet which in its masculine form predominantly connected with Agni[88] but Viṣṇu[89] and Soma[90] are also spoken of as such.

Pañca-jātā Vardhayantī, 'causing to prosper the Five people' (6 61,6). Glorifying the goddess the seer says that Sarasvatī is one who makes the *Pañcajātāḥ* (= *Pañca–janāḥ*), 'the group of Five tribes' flourish. The term *Pañca–jātāḥ* may mean some heavenly five entities because they are called *yajñiyāsāḥ*, 'worthy of sacrificial worship'[91] and *daivya jana*, 'heavenly people[92].' At another place[93] it is clearly mentioned that they reside in heaven[94].

But on the other hand we cannot rule out that '*pañca-janāḥ*' does not mean terrestrial tribes at all. Being Indra's beneficiaries[95] they may be 'Five-warring tribes of Aryans' amongst whom he displays his power[96]. They may be the confederation of the Turvasas, Yadus, Anus, Druhyus, and Purus[97]. When Aśvins freed Atri, a mundane seer, from the strait pit; he was honoured by the Five people along with their subjects.[98] Agni is requested by (warrior-) worshippers that their glory may shine over the Five people[99]. From these references and a few

and a few others it seems that the Five-people were mundane. In fact, it seems that to begin with the Five people were taken to be celestial beings, who were worshipped with oblations but thereafter that nomenclature was borne by the mundane people who played an active part in the growth of Vedic cult as a result of which they were helped to grow by Sarasvatī[100]. Many other gods also are said are as furthering the Five people[101].

Vāje vāje havyā, 'to be invoked in every conflict' (6, 61, 12). It has been discussed above[102].

Vibhvane kṛtā, 'carved out by Vibhvan' (6, 61, 13). It has been discussed above[103].

Upa-stutyā cikituṣā, 'to be extolled by the knower (of her majesty—Skandasvāmī)' (6, 61, 13). It corresponds to the idea contained in her epithct *yajatā*, (=*yaṣṭvyā*) mentioned above.

Saptathī, 'seventh' (7, 36, 6). It has been discussed above[104].

Sindhumātā, 'who has (celestial) river as its mother' (7, 36, 6). It has been discussed above[105].

Dharuṇam āyasīpūḥ, 'protectress, an iron fortress' (7, 95, 1). It has been discussed above[106].

Pra-bābadhānā, 'capturing vehemently' (7, 95, 1). Sarasvatī flows on capturing vehemently all waters (*viśvo apaḥ*) of other minor torrents[107].

Ekā, 'unique' (7, 95, 2). It is natural enough in a laudation to speak of the deity as unique or chief. Such laudation is at the root of the idea of monotheistic power[108].

Yatī giribhyaḥ ā samudrāt, 'flowing from mountains up to ocean' (7, 95, 2). Since this description does not agree with the small stream of modern Sarasvatī, scholars apply it to the Indus[109]. Again finding that the modern Sarasvatī does not reach the sea, some scholars doubted whether Sarasvatī in this hymn stands for a river at all[110]. But the Sarasvatī did reach the sea and its dry bed has now been located and many ancient sites on its banks discovered. Thus the adoration of the river goddess is veracious[111].

Rāyaś cetanti bhuvanasya bhūreḥ, 'distributing riches to the vast or whole world', (7, 95, 2). Dr. B. R. Sharma[112] thinks that a terrestrial river 'cannot distribute the riches to the people of the whole world', therefore, he thinks that Sarasvatī in such *ṛcs* is 'more of celestial character than terrestrial'. But the

river-goddess (i. e., the River, who is thought of as a goddess), bestowing fertility on the lands, providing water vital for sustenance of life, conferring rich harvest (*yaśasaḥ*, also meaning riches hence fame), etc., can be most naturally conceived in her laudations as distributing riches to people of the whole world. Laudations often contain a little flattery, we, therefore, need not doubt that such a request cannot be made to a River (i.e., the river-goddess)[113].

Mitajñubhiḥ...namasyair iyānā,' approached by the worshippers with reverential salutations' (7, 95, 4). These words speak of the devotion of worshippers to the goddess Sarasvatī who approached her with kneeling postures or prostrations.

Rāyā yujā, 'possessed of wealth' (7, 95, 4). By her riches she renders diverse comforts to her worshippers. At another place she has been said as distributing wealth[114].

Juhvānā...namobhiḥ, 'invoked with salutations' (7, 95, 5). This attribute speaks of the devotion of worshippers to her.

Śubhrā, 'the bright one' (7, 95, 6; 7, 96, 2). This epithet is commonly applied to most of the Vedic deities including the Rivers (=river-goddesses)[115]. It is but to emphasise, generally. the outward but also inward appearance of a deity.

Avitrī, 'one who protects (f.)' (7, 96, 2). It corresponds to *dharuṇam, vira-patnī, dhīnām avitrī*, etc., in its nature.

Marutsakhā, 'associate of the Maruts' (7, 96, 2). It has been discussed above[116].

Bhadrā, 'auspicious (*kalyāṇī*)' (7, 96, 3).

Akavārī (a-kava-ari—Sāyaṇa), 'not having weak enemies', 'not contemptible as a foe' (7, 96, 3). [117]

This epithet is suitably borne by Indra[118]. This epithet is meaningful because Sarasvatī as 'enemy of the atheists' is prayed at other places also to smite the revilers of gods[119].

Suyamā, 'beautiful in form', 'easy to be bound or guided' (9, 81, 4).[120].

Tanyatuḥ, 'a thunderous voice' or 'one who impels the atmospheric i.e., thunderous voice' (10, 65, 13)[121]. This epithet implies that Sarasvatī is a goddess of 'second function'. We shall go further to say that this epithet of Sarasvatī also speaks of her affinity with Indra, who in a Brāhmaṇa text is explicitly called thunder[122].

In addition to it, certain epithets are borne by Sarasvatī as a member of the group in which more than two divinities are prayed collectively. She is thus *sajoṣas*[123], 'containing comparable love', i.e., 'having responsive indulgence for the worshipper' like Agni, Indra, Varuṇa, Mitra and others; who with Sarasvatī are said *sajoṣasaḥ*'[124]. She is said as *daśasyantī*, 'bounteous' along with Bṛhaddivā and Rākā[125]. Sarasvatī is said as *svapas*, 'an active one', when all the three goddessess—she, Iḷā and Bhāratī are said as '*svapasaḥ*[126]. As a constituent of Nadyaḥ Sarasvatī is said to be *sudughā*, 'of pleasant milk', *sudhārā*, 'of fair stream', and '*svena payasā pīpyānā*, 'swelling with her own water'[127].

Thus the epithets of Sarasvatī are much felicitous, illuminating and delightfully decorative. Their study with a few other functions of the goddess shows that she was thought of in her various aspects by the Ṛgvedic seers.

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1. In later Vedic literature, however, such richness and colourfulness of the epithets of Sarasvatī, as we meet with in ṚV, are wanting.
2. See supra p. 10. Cf. Waters are invoked in the ṚV to cleanse a man from defilement : 10 17, 10; 11.
3. Nigh. 1, 8; ṚV 1, 48, 16; 92, 13, 15; 4, 55, 9 and etc.
4. 10, 75, 8 and 1, 120, 10. 5. *Vājo balam* (Nigh. 2, 9) *vego vā, tadvatī vājinī/Kāssau/Sarasvatyāḥ svabhūtā senā/Tadvatī vājinīvatī.*
6. *Vājo haviṛ-lakṣaṇamannam, tad yasyā asti sā vājinī yāga-santatiḥ/Tadvatī vājinīvatī.*
7. *Vāja* is believed to be present in the waters, AV 13, 1, 2; a text extolling the might and qualities of Sun.
8. See e. g. Indra: 1,5,5; Uṣas : 1, 30, 22; 48, 16; 92,7; Aśvins : 1,116, 19; Agni : 6, 1, 11; 8, 102, 9; and Soma : 9, 90, 2.
9. 7, 95, 6. 10. 3, 25, 3. 11. 9, 31, 2. 12. 10, 26, 7. 13. 10, 26, 9.
14. 6, 61, 6.
15. Having studied various contexts in which this word is used, it seems that *vāja* does not express a single concept but a group or complex of ideas,beliefs and conceptions. It is power manifesting in vegetative life, strength. potency, vigour, the last word being an approximately correct English equivalent. Dr. J. Gonda (Aspects of Early Viṣṇuism p. 43 connects the root *vāj* with the Latin *vegeo*, 'to be brisk, to set in motion' and *vigeo*, 'to be in the prime of life', etc. English words like 'vigil' and 'vigour' are also derived from this root, Annandale, The Students' Dictionary, Blackie and Son, Bombay, 1910, pp. 784-85.

15 a) In several passages of the ṚV the word means steed, see, e. g., 2, 5,1; 3, 53, 23; 6, 75, 7. 16. Ved. Ind, Vol. I, p. 401. 17. Nir. 11, 26.

18. See his comm. on 1, 3, 10; 1, 58, 9; 3, 3, 2; 8, 80, 10; 9, 93, 5 and AV 20, 35, 16.
19. Indices and Appendices to the Nirukta, Lahore, 1929, p. 79 (Devanāgarī figures).
20. 1, 58, 9; 60, 5; 61, 16; 62, 13; 63, 9; 64, 15, etc.
21. 8, 80, 10; 9, 93, 5; (and AV 20, 35, 16). 22. 3, 3, 2.
23. See supra pp. 10; 18. 24. Gods in general and Soma in particular impels such a speech : *Pūṣeva dhī-javanossi Soma*-9,88,3. Also see 6, 47,3; 7, 84, 4; 95, 5; 97, 32. He is the generator of hymns and maker of seers (9. 96, 18). 25. VM, p. 18–'All the gods are guardians of honesty and righteousness'.
26. 7, 81, 6-Sāyaṇa explains *sūnṛtā-vatī–priyasatyātmikā vāk tadvatī*
27. VM, p. 109. 28. See supra p. 18 also. 29. 7, 95, 4; 6; 8, 21, 17.
30. 3, 33, 3. 31. 7, 75, 8. 32. See supra pp.15;23 33. See. supra p. 11.
34. 3, 33, 3. 35. 1, 23, 16; 3, 33, 3; 10, 9, 26; 10, 17, 10.
36. 7, 95, 5. 37. 2, 41, 16. 38. 7, 95, 4. 39. 7, 95, 2.
40. 7, 95, 1. 41. 6, 61, 13. 42. 7, 95, 4. 43. 6, 61, 13. Sindhu has also been said as such in 10, 75, 7. 44. 3, 6, 10.
45. 8, 73, 16. 46. 8, 25, 3. 47. 7, 56, 2; 10, 36, 2; 10, 66, 6.
48. 3, 54, 4; 4, 18, 6. 49. 3, 61, 6; 4, 52, 2. 50. 3, 33, 5; 56, 5.
51. Griswold, op. cit., p. 107.
52. Heaven and Earth are called 'the ancient parents (*mātarā*) of *ṛta* and 'whose sons are gods' (*devaputrā*)–6, 17, 7. Heaven and Earth, then are parents of gods and parents of *ṛta*.
53. For example, Uṣas is not independent of *ṛta*. She was borne in *ṛta* (*ṛtejā*—1, 113, 12) and so her task is to cherish and protect it. She does not infringe the heavenly ordinances (*daivyaṁ vratam*—1, 92, 12). the law of *ṛta* (*ṛtasya dhāma*—1, 123, 9) rather follows its rein (1, 123, 13). To one who doubts his existence Indra says : 'I exist, 0 singer, look upon me here, all that exists I surpass in splendour. The commandments of *ṛta* make me mighty. (8, 100, 3-4). Sūrya (Dadhikrā) is spoken of as *ṛta* (4, 40, 5). Aditi is '*ṛtasya patnī*', 'Queen over *ṛta*'. Of all gods the two chief Ādityas, Mitra and Varuṇa are most intimately connected with *ṛta*"—VM, p. 26.
54. Cf. Uṣas returns day by day to the place appointed-1, 123, 13.
55. Sāyaṇa, Veṅkaṭamādhava and Mudgala translate *yajatā*, as *yaṣṭavyā*, 'to whom sacrifice should be offered'.
56. See supra pp. 11; 15. 57. Nir. 12, 30.
58. As Udgītha and Sāyaṇa translate, but the former takes *pāvīra* and not *pavīsa* as standing for '*āyudha*'. 59. 10, 60, 3.
60. 'Patriot', Magazine section, March 16, 1969—A Review of the Research work done by the Deptt. of Geology, Punjab University in collaboration with the Oslo University.
61. See supra p. 17. 62. 1, 64, 4; 122, 1; 5, 54, 10..
63. 10, 131, 4-5. 64. OST. Vol. V, 3rd Ed. Amsterdon, 1967, p. 340, note 508. 65. See supra p. 13 . 66. See supra p. 16;19

66A- See under 'I' Sarasvatī a goddess of Learning and Intellect ?
67. Cf. In 7, 28, 2 : Indra who having taken his weapon is invincible and by his mere resourcefulness (*kratu*) is *ghora*; in 2, 12, 5, being *ghora* he is stated to be able to diminish the possessions of the niggard; also Cf. 1, 167, 4; 169, 7. In 9, 89, 4, Soma is also said as *ghora*.
68. See supra pp. 10 - 11. 69. 8, 22, 14; 1, 3, 3; 10, 39, 11.
70. 7, 69, 1. 71. 8, 23, 19.
72. Sāyaṇa has, however, translated '*hiraṇya-vartinī*' 'having a golden path' i. e. golden banks when it has been applied to another river in 8, 26, 18. 73. See supra pp. 11; 13.
74. Louis Renou, Religions of India, London, 1953, p. 19.
75. Vṛtra is *nadīnam paridhi*', 3, 33, 6. Also see VM, p. 58—60.
76. 6, 61, 12. 77. 7, 36, 6. 78. 8, 54, 4.
79. Vol. II, p. 438, note 20.
80. Refer to 'Vision in Long Darkness', op. cit., p. 19—20.
81. *Sapta ambādyaḥ antarikṣa-nadyaḥ tā, bhaginyo yasyāḥ sā sapta-svasā*, 'seven-sistered is that who has Amba and etc., the seven rivers of the atmospheric region as her sisters'. Sāyaṇa's interpretation — '*Gāyatryādīni sapta-chandāṁsi svasāro yasyās tādṛśī*', 'One who has Gāyatrī and the like—the seven metres as its seven sisters' — is the result of her erroneous conception that Sarasvatī in the ṚV is a *Jñāna-devatā*.
82. 8, 54, 4; and Khila 3, 6, 4.
83. In Avestā also reference to Hapta-hindu and the beautiful 'Haraihvātī' is made separately : Vendidad Fargard I, quoted from K. B. Pathak comm. Vol., p. 32.
84. N. G. Sardesai (Sir R. G. Bhandarkar comm. Vol. BORI, Poona, 1917, p. 94) curiously enough locates 'Seveu-rivers' in a country whieh is in Central Asia, in Russian Turkistan, North of the Ala Tau Range, East of the lower Illi River, and West of the Lepsa River, and identifies them as Lepsa, Baskan. Aksu, Sarkau, Biyen, Kartal, and Koksu.

Bhattacharya, Haridas : K. B. Pathak comm. Vol., p. 32 identifies them with Gaṅgā, Yamunā. Godāvarī, Sarasvatī, Narmada, Sindhu and Kāveri, but is absolutely wrong to count Godāvarī and Narmadā in the Ṛgvedic system.
85. In the Mahābhārata Śalya Parva, 38, the system of seven-streams is different, similarly in the Purāṇas, the system of seven rivers differs in every text.
86. One may not agree with Sāyaṇa that the system of seven rivers here comprises of the Gaṅgā and etc. because we have seen above that Sarasvatī was one of the system of seven streams—the Gaṅga and others mentioned in 10, 75, 5.
87. See supra p. 10 . 88. 3, 20, 2. Also see VM p. 93.
89. 1, 156, 5. 90. 8, 83, 5; 9, 103, 2. 91. 10, 53, 4; 5.
92. 10, 53, 6. 93. 10, 60, 4.
94. In his book 'The Ṛgveda as Land-Namabok' pp. 8–9, A.K. Coomaraswamy observes : 'In any case the Ṛgveda provides us with texts amply sufficient to prove that the kindreds which participate in the First Sacrifice are classes or categories of divine beings or principles,

ancestors indeed of humanity, but not yet human in a biological sense. R. Sham Shastri (P. O. Vol. 7, p. 27) takes them to be five minor planets which again means that he has acknowledged their celestial character. In 1, 90, 10 Aditi has been identified with the Five People.

95. Cf. Indra is said as guard of the Five People—1, 100, 12. All the riches of the Five People are dependent on Indra–1, 176, 3.
96. 3, 37, 9.
97. Ved. Ind. Vol. I, pp. 466–67. Sāyaṇa's explanation that they were four castes and Niṣādas or indigenous barbarians does not seem to be correct because in the period of the ṚV there were no such distinctions of caste. 98. 1, 117, 3.
99. According to a commentator Five People may mean 'five classes of beings viz., gods, men, Gandharvas and Apsaras, serpents and Pitṛs.
100. Refer to 'Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda', op. cit. p. 67.
101. See e. g., 7, 79, 1 and etc. 102. See supra p. 15.
103. See supra p. 31. 104. See supra p. 26. 105. See supra p. 26.
106. See supra p. 17. Sāyaṇa interprets *dharunam* as *dhārayitrī*, noticing here the reversion of gender (liṅgavyatyena).
107. Veṅkaṭamādhava says : *prakarṣeṇa badhnāti ātmani ekikurvatī gacchati*, 'flows on capturing vehemently i.e. gathering into itself ... ... '. This interpretation is happier than that of Sāyaṇa who translates the word as *bhṛśam bādhamānā*, 'preventing vehemently'.
108. VM, p. 17, 109. VM, p. 87. According to Dr. Das, op. cit. Indus and Sarasvatī are not identical.
110. N. Langlois : OST Vol. III, p. 241, note 13, Vol. II, p. 346, thinks that Sarasvatī in this hymn stands, not for a river but for 'the goddess of Sacrifice, with her libations'. "These libations form a river, which flows from the mountains, where the sacrifice is performed and where Soma plant is collected. This river flows into Samudra (Sea) which is the vessel destined to receive the libations".
111. The Lost Sarasvatī, Prof. Indras, Vallabhbhai Vidyapeeth, Gujrat, passim. 112. The Vedic Sarasvatī, CR, July, 1949, p. 55.
113. It is all the more incorrect to suggest that since Sarasvatī is incapable (being viewed as a tiny stream as it flows at present) of distributing riches to the whole world, therefore, this epithet should be applied to Indus-CR, July 1949, p. 55 and VM. p. 87.
114. 7, 95, 2.
115. Sarasvatī, Bṛhaddivā and Rākā all are said as '*subhrāḥ*' (5, 42, 12). The Maruts are also said as '*subhrā*'—'shining, beautiful' (1, 19, 5; 167, 4). In 1, 85, 3; 2, 36, 2; 8, 7, 25; 28 this epithet is used for their proper name. An epithet applied in dual form to Vipāṭ and Śutudrī–3, 33, 1.
116. See supra p. 23f.
117. Sāyaṇa's interpretation *akutsita-gamanā*, 'having gait free from contempt' does not seem to be convincing.
118. ṚV 3, 47, 5 (=6, 19, 11 and YV 7, 36). Here Sāyaṇa aptly translates this words as *akutsita-śatruḥ* or *prabhūta-śatruḥ* 'not having weak enemies'. In the context of Sarasvatī also this translation is to be preferred.

Svāmī Dayānanda's etymological explanation of this word (Y.V. 7, 36) is very dexterous. It reads : *'kautir dharmmam upadiśatīti kavo na kavoSkavo dharmātmā tasyāriḥ śatruḥ'*, which means 'who is the enymy of the persons devoid of dharma'.
119. 6, 61, 3; 11.
120. *Suvigrahā*, Sāyaṇa. Also Cf. Sarasvatī with Bhārāti and Iḷā (the two members with whom she forms a triad) is also called beautiful '*supeśas* 9, 5, 8'. It may also mean 'one who can be bound easily (by prayer), i.e. tractable, easy to be managed'. Cf. her epithet '*suhavā*'—AV 7, 11, 1.
121. *Stanayitrī*, Sāyaṇa. The word in 1, 23, 1 stands for a 'roar' (of victory); in 1, 32, 13; 116, 12—for 'the thunderous voice'.
122 *Stanyitnur evendraḥ*—ŚBr. 11. 6, 39. Sāyaṇa explains *stanayitnu* in the sense of 'thunder cloud'. 123. 10, 65, 1
124. Udgītha translates this word as *samāna-prītayaḥ*, 'having similar or reciprocal love'.
125. 5, 42, 12. Sāyaṇa translates this word as *kāmān yacchantyaḥ*, 'bestowing desiderata'.
126. *Sukarmāṇaḥ*, 'of noble actions', Sāyaṇa (10, 110, 8).
127. 7, 36, 36.

Worship of the River-Goddess.

It has been shown above that objects like rivers, waters, sun and moon were glorified and worshipped by the Vedic worshipper but at the same time the deities having the same name were also glorified and worshipped[1]. The Nairuktas thought of the first type of worship as heathenish[2] and thus they originated an idea of the presence of a presiding deity in an object worshipped by people.

No last word can be pronounced on which of these two modes of worship is anterior. The history of religious evolution and the behaviour of man indicate that the objects would have been deified and myths were woven around them, supernatural and divine powers were attached to raise them to the highest pitch of divinity. In other words, this order of worship of the deities would have been from below upwards but it is not found in literary monuments. "These (literary monuments) show on the contrary a worship which steadily tends from above earthwards"[3]

1. Winternitz, Hist. of Indian Literature Vol. I, p. 75.
2. It was because of this attitude of the olden priests that the AV. could not be taken as a Veda wherein the worship of trees and plants, herbs and medicines and even amulets is recommended for acquiring benefit to the self and casting harm on others.
3. E. W. Hopkins. Religions of India; p. 39.

Eulogies, Prayers and Invocations to Sarasvatī

Out of his conviction that a god displays a favourable and responsive attitude towards his devotees, the worshipper exalts him in order to obtain divine blessings and benisons and gain mundane boons and benefits. As part of His worship the devotee exalts the god, prays Him for bestowing the things for which he pines and invokes Him for help and succour in hour of need. Thus eulogy, prayer and invocation (i. e., prayer to come down for help) are three compartments of worship. Worship of a deity in the ṚV as such is performed by a worshipper to secure for him mostly personal ends. Eulogies, prayers and invocations to Sarasvatī are often contained combinedly in the *ṛcs*, however, we discuss them below seperately.

Eulogies of Sarasvatī

A god is praised or eulogized in order to evoke his favour and good will. Śaunaka says that 'eulogy is expressed by means of name, form, action and relationship (of the god with his devotee)'[1], that is, a god is glorified by recounting his elevating epithets, exalting vocatives, by describing his pleasing and lovable form and munificent actions and his relationship with (i. e., his nearness of responsive attitude to) his devotee.

Sarasvatī's action (which perhaps is a specific characterstic af Sarasvatī as Yāska[2] chooses it to delineate the personality of the goddess) of 'making manifest her mighty flood by her (prompt) action (against the enemies who come to disturb the sacrifice)' is contained in her eulogy, *Maho arṇaḥ Sarasvatī pracetayati ketunā*[3]. In the last hemistich of the same *ṛc* she is, therefore, said to be 'one who presides over (*virājati*) all (*viśvaḥ*) the prayers or sacrifices (*dhiyaḥ*) (of her devotees). That is, she shines over (or accepts) the prayers or sacrifices of the suppliant.

In Sarasvatī rests all the food, that is, she make crops grow in abundance with her fertile waters.[4] Sarasvatī's mighty flood which is limitless, inviolable, swift-moving and agile, goes ahead with a thunderous voice[5]. As Sūrya transgresses days and they never return, similarly, Sarasvatī transgresses the despicable fiends[6]. Sarasvatī, the seven-sistered, dear amongst the dear ones of the worshippers was also dear to the forefathers of the worshipper[7]. She pervades the wide tracts of earth and the atmosphere. Stationed in three regions she, of seven component parts, makes the Five people thrive[8]. In majesty, Sarasvatī is known perfectly amongst the mighty ones, she is unique (*anyā*) because of her glistening glory (or food); she is most active amongst the active ones; she has been carved out by Vibhvan wide like a chariot for victory; she should, therefore, be praised by the sagacious seer.[9] Sarasvatī, the seventh, one who has (celestial) ocean as her mother, flows along with other rivers, who wish for our food (*yaśasaḥ vāvaśānāḥ* i. e., who expect oblations from us), who have copious milk (i. e., life sustaining water, *sudughāḥ*) and who have fair streams (*sudhārāḥ*) and who swell with their own water[10]. Sarasvatī and Agni also protect his riches from the robber, who has been favoured by the Maruts[11]. Sarasvatī flows rapidly with a life-giving (*dhāyasā*) flood of water (*prakṣodasā*); she is protectress (*dharuṇam*), as it were, an iron fortress; she flows straight like a road, captivating all waters; (of other streams of minor stature) in majesty or might (*mahinā*) she is another ocean.[12]. Sarasvatī which flows from the mountains to the sea, the (most) pious amongst the streams, alone (*ekā*) recognised (*cetat*) Nahuṣa, that is responded to his entreaty and supplied him opulent milk and ghee[13]. Sarasvatī along with Indra is a model of munificence followed by the munificent kinglings of this mundane sphere, one amongst them is the peerless king Citra[14]. Along with Aśvins, Sarasvatī renders help of refreshing Indra (perhaps by her waters) when he had drunk with might (i. e., had overdrunk)[15].

1. *Stuti tu nāmnā rūpeṇa karmaṇā bāndhavena ca-Bṛ. Dev.* 1, 7.
2. Nir. 11, 27.
3. 1, 3, 12.*Maho arṇaḥ*, 'great flood' is also taken as an appellative of Sarasvatī by some scholars. Dr. V. S. Agrawala (Vision in Long Darkness, p.191) takes Sarasvatī as a Great Flood released from the waters of the Primeval Ocean, but Yāska has not hinted at such a notion contained in these words. Our rendering, i. e., taking *maho arṇaḥ* in the accusitive form seems to be a bit more preferrable when it is viewed that by taking *maho arṇaḥ* as an appellative of Sarasvatī, we shall be depriving the verb—*pra-cetayatī*, to have its object.
4. 2, 41, 17. 5. 6, 61, 8. Cf. 10, 75, 3: Sindhu is also said as rushing on bellowing like a bull. His roar is lifted upto heaven from earth. 6. 6, 61, 9. 7. 6, 61, 10; *Sujuṣṭā purātanaiḥ Ṛṣibhiḥ sevitā*, Sāyaṇa. 8. 6, 61, 11. 9. 6, 61, 13.
10. 7, 36, 6. 11. 7, 40, 3, 12. 7, 95, 1. 13. 7, 95, 2.
14. 8, 21, 17. It is not clear how Bṛ. Dev. (VI, 61) arrived at the story of Citra being the king of rats. Dr. K. R. Potdar, discussing 'contribution of patrons', carves out the career of king Citra; Sacrifice in the Ṛgveda, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1953, p. 183.
15. 10, 131, 5.

Prayers and Invocations made to Sarasvatī*

When a devotee is convinced of the munificence of his worshippable god, he requests him for his blessings in the form of certain mundane (both concrete and abstract) and heavenly boons. Thus faith is at the root of the prayer and prayer in such a case becomes an outlet for pouring out whatever is most pressing on one's mind. In the *ṛcs* pertaining to Sarasvatī, we come across generally with two types of prayers which may be termed, 'ritualistic prayers' and 'petitional prayers'. By 'ritualistic prayers' we mean 'those songs which contain invitations to the deity to come to accept the sacrifice'; for example :

Yajñaṁ vaṣṭu dhiyāvasuḥ,

'may she, rich by devotion, desire our sacrifice' (1, 3. 10).

Yajñaṁ dadhe Sarasvatī,

'may Sarasvatī accept our sacrifice' (1, 3, 11).

Ā no...Sarasvatī yajatā gantu yajñaṁ,

'may worshipful Sarasvatī accept our sacrifice' (5, 43, 11).

Āsadyāsmin barhiṣi mādayasva,

'Seated upon the sacred grass, be joyful' (10, 17, 8).

Petitional prayers may be said to be those which are more intimately connected with the social life and needs of the individual who is a member of the community. We find that almost in all prayers of this type the Vedic poet asks for 'sons, food and riches and safety from the hands of diseases, fiends and foes'. Many such prayers are addressed to Sarasvatī. As society is a moving progressive phenomenon, the contents of petitional prayers also naturally change.

Indulging in a little digression, we observe here that the phenomenon of 'fixation' of a prayer was the main reason which turned the spontaneous prayers of the Ṛgvedic seers into mere spells later on. The ritualistic prayers tend to become spells soon for they are often repeated, they have always to be uttered in a particular atmosphere and thus tend to become 'fixed' in character both verbally and in spirit. Out of the numerous Vedic repetitions compiled by Bloomfield, a very large number would be seen as coming from these ritualistic prayers. In petitional prayers also the refrains like *Yūyaṁ pāta svastibhiḥ sadā naḥ* and *Bṛhad vadema vidathe suvīrāḥ* are illustrative of this phenomenon of 'fixation' of a prayer. In the context of Sarasvatī also we can quote at least one such petitional prayer as has become in latter period a spell for making a woman fruitful[1].

* Since invocation is but a summoning-prayer, i. e., a request made to the deity for coming down for help, we discuss both prayers and invocations under one head.

Now we take up the account of the prayers addressed to Sarasvatī being a member of the 'Tisro Devīḥ'. Ritualistic prayers are often addressed to her along with her other two companions. She with others is invoked to visit the sacrifice[2] to sit upon the sacred *kuśā* grass strewn at sacrifice[3]. Like other gods of status, Sarasvatī is also implored singly to visit the sacrifice. She is invoked as such not by the present worshipper alone but also by Fathers who circumambulate the *yajña* having come from the south (their quarter)[4]. In another passage[5] she, the holy Sarasvatī, is implored to come from high mountains, as it were, from heaven (to earth) to visit the sacrifice of the worshippers. At sacrifice she is implored to accept the present prayers of the sacrificer (*Imā brahma Sarasvatī juṣasva*, 2, 41, 18).

In the Viśvedevāḥ prayers, Sarasvatī is requested, along with other gods, to approach (the worshippers), i. e., visit and accept or take delight in the prayer or sacrifice (of the worshippers)[6]. Again in a similar prayer, Sarasvatī, in conjunction with Dhīs (Holy Thoughts and Puraṁdhi, is prayed to pay heed to the words of the suppliant[7]. With Dhīs in particular, she is requested to be gracious[8]. Similarly, along with other river-goddess, she is requested to listen to the song (*stoma*, 'call' or 'prayer')[9]. Like Agni who is characteristically an intermediary between gods and men[10], Sarasvatī has also been prayed to carry the *yajña* (to gods)[11]. She is not only prayed to accept the *Yajña*[12], but also implored to protect it[13]. Sarasvatī, the protectress of the rituals or devotional songs (*dhīnām avitrī*) is prayed to protect(prayer or sacrifice)[14]. Along with other deities such as Pṣūan, Viṣṇu, and the Seven Rivers, Sarasvatī is prayed to protect the sacrifice of the worshipper[15]. As a constituent of the Three-Goddesses, Sarasvatī along with the other members of the triad is prayed to protect the (strewn) sacred grass (*barhis*, which symbolically stands for *yajña*) that is a flawless (*acchidram*) refuge (*śaraṇam*) of the sacrificers[16].

In petitional prayers a god is often prayed to bless the worshipper with food, wealth and prosperity. It holds good in the case of Sarasvatī also; for its illustration see the following prayers addressed to Sarasvatī :

(i) *Rāyas poṣaṁ yajamāneṣu dhehi,*
'Give wealth and nourishing food to the sacrificers'(10,17,9).

(ii) ......*śubhre stuvate rāsi vājān,*
'O blessed one, give strengthening food to him who exalts you' (7, 95, 6).

(iii) *Sarasvati tad gṛnate vayo dhāt,*
'May Sarasvatī give full life to one who lauds' (10, 30, 12).

(iv) *Radā Puṣeva naḥ sanim,*
'Like Pūṣan, i. e., acting like Pūṣan, give us booty(6, 61, 6).

(v) *Sarasvaty-abhi no neṣi vasyo,*
'Take us, Sarasvatī, to the treasure, i. e., help us find the treasure' (6, 61, 14).

At another place[17] the river-goddess Sarasvatī is prayed to give water, rich in ghee and honey; that is, the goddess is requested to give invigorating food. She is also besought to bring food that grants immunity from disease[18]. In Viśvedevāḥ prayers, Sarasvatī along with other gods is prayed to make the food abundant for the worshipper[19]. Along with other goodesses like Bṛhaddivā and Rākā, Sarasvatī is prayed by worshippers to think of wealth for them.[20]

Another prayer popular with the Vedic worshipper is for securing general well-being and protection. Sarasvatī is also prayed as such by a worshipper when he says: *Sarasvatī naḥ subhagā mayas karat*[20](a), 'May auspicious Sarasvatī grant us happiness' She is also besought to sanction well-being and good-luck for her worshipper[21]. Again in a prayer made exclusively to the goddessess, Sarasvatī as one of them is prayed to grant general well-being (*svasti*) and protection (*ūti*)[22].

Another stock prayer of the Vedic worshipper is for gaining wealth coupled with brave sons. Sarasvatī also, along with other deities is requested to give wealth with noble offspring[23]. We have already referred to a prayer (10,184, 2) in which Sarasvatī in conjunction with other gods, has been prayed to hold the impregnation of a woman.

Sometimes the goddess is prayed to bless the worshipper with abstract things like glory.[24] Along with Iḷā and Bhāratī, too, Sarasvatī is prayed to inspire for the glory (*śriye*)[25],

In her *ghorā* form, Sarasvatī is approached for help by warring tribes[26]. She is implored by the devotees to kill detractors and the progeny of the sorcerer Bṛsaya[27]. Since in heaven she stood by the side of Indra who kills the Chief of Śaṇḍikas, she is invoked by the warrior to conquer his foes (on earth).[28]

She is prayed to protect man who calls her for help like Indra at the commencement of a battle fought for the attainment of booty (*dhane hite*)[29]. As a killer of the enemies (*vṛtraghnī*), she is requested to listen to the eulogy of her devotees *vaṣṭi suṣṭutim*)[30].

Sarasvatī is invoked 'to respond with her association towards the friendship and fondness for her proximity', *juṣasva naḥ sakhyā veśyā ca* and 'not to let the worshippers go away from her fertile lands to tracts far off which are barren being devoid of her. At another place the worshippers pray that Sarasvatī may respond to their prostration for remaining in her periphery of bliss and may they resort unto her, the most beloved, like a tree (giving shelter and shade)[31]. With Gnā-s, she is reqested to grant the eulogist again an unassailable and flawless refuge[32].

From the account of such 'petitional prayers' as are addressed to Sarasvatī, one can very safely say that desiderata of the Vedic worshipper is limited to a very few things which are quite simple in nature and extent. His aspirations range between the gains of brave progeny and long life, rich food and prosperity in general, immunity from marauders and diseases and conquest of his foes.

Ṛcs which contain both praise and prayer of a deity are a few in the ṚV, says Śaunaka.[33] In the context of Sarasvatī, we may quote a beautiful *ṛc* of this type which reads :

'*Yas te stanaḥ śasayo yo mayo bhūr*
yena viśvā puṣyasi vāryāṇi /
'*Yo ratnadhā vasuvid yaḥ sudatraḥ*
Sarasvatī tam iha dhātave kaḥ // (1, 164, 49).

Śarasvatī, may we drain that breast of your, which is exhaustless, source of pleasure, by which you feed all choicest things, which is wealth giver, treasure finder and free bestower,' (R. T. H. Griffith).

This is a sincere prayer of a child to its mother whom he praises to evoke her filial love. Sarasvatī is here invoked in the form of a 'mother cow who is suckling all'.[34] The River goddess is first praised that her breast (i. e. her bed of water; cf. *pipivāṁsaṁ Sarasvataḥ stanam*-7, 96, 6–there,too, *stana* stands for waterbed) is exhaustless, spring of pleasure, with which she feeds all best things, that is giver of wealth, finder of treasures (*vasus*), and munificent (*sudatraḥ*). She is then prayed by the worshippers to suckle them with that breast for their sustenance.

The process of glorification is incomplete if we do not recount the earlier instances of the blessings of a god that are obtained as a result of his prayer. In order to remind the god that he did bless a fellow-being on a certain occasion in the past and thus to evoke his response for himself the worshipper recounts the favours done by the god in the case of others. Such a prayer is pregnant with praise. On one side the god is reminded that he should act with favourable justice to the present worshipper also by not discriminating him from the man blessed previously and on the other side the god is glorified because the surety of his blessing is impressed upon his fresh devotees. Recounting such favours done by Sarasvatī, the Vedic worshipper says that as a result of his devotion, Sarasvatī gave Vadhryśvā a fierce Divodāsa, who was a canceller of debts and exterminator of the Paṇis[35]. It was Sarasvatī alone who blessed the king Nahuṣa and provided him with his desiderata, to wit, opulent milk and ghee for carrying on his avowed *yajña*[36] (for 1000 years[37]). She helped devoted men to get back their lands annexed by the enemy and let flowed her water to their benefit[38].

Sarasvatī is also beheld to be ensuring reward for the devotees of Soma rather students of the *Pāvamānī* hymns. We see her as drawing forth water, milk, butter and honey for him (i.e. conferring on him the life-giving sapful objects) who holds with his mind the hymns dedicated to purifying Soma–the essence (i. e., the savour of life) collected by seers[39].

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1. *Garbhaṁ dhehi Sinīvāli, garbhaṁ dhehi Sarasvatī |*
Garbhaṁ te Aśvinau devāvā dhattaṁ puṣkarasrajā || (10, 184, 2). Hopkins quotes it as one of the few incantatory verses found in the ṚV., Religions of India, p. 149, n. 3.
2. 9, 5, 8. 3. 1, 13, 9; 3, 4, 8 (=7, 2, 8); 10, 110, 8.
4. 10, 17, 9. 5. 5, 43, 11. 6. 5, 46, 2; 7, 39, 5; 9, 81, 4.
8. 7, 35, 11. 9. 10, 75, 5. 10. VM, p. 96. 11. 1, 3, 10—acc. to Sāyaṇa's comm. 12. 1, 3, 11—*Yajñaṁ dadhe Sarasvatī.*
13. 6, 49, 7—*Vīrapatnī dhiyaṁ dhāt*/Sāyaṇa's comm. reads *dhiyaṁ yajñākhyaṁ karma*'. 14. 6, 61, 4. 15. 8, 54, 4. 16. 2, 3, 8.
17. 10, 64, 9. 18. 10, 17, 8. 19. 6, 50, 12. 20. 5, 42, 12—'*varivasyantu—asmabhyaṁ dhanam icchantu*–Sāyaṇa. 20. (a) 1,89,3. 21. 7, 96, 3.
22. 2, 32, 8. 23. 3, 54, 13. '*dhātā rayiṁ saha-vīram*'; also cf., 2, 11, 13. '*Rayiṁ rāsi vīravantam*' and 1, 12, 11. '*Rayiṁ vīravatīm iṣam*' and etc.
24; 2, 41, 16. 25. 1, 188, 8. 26. See supra p. 15.
27. 6, 61, 3. 28. 2, 30, 8. 29. 6, 61, 5. 30. 6, 61, 7.
31. 7, 95, 5. 32. 6, 49, 7—*Gnābhiracchidraṁ śarnaṁ sajoṣā durā-dharṣaṁ gṛnate śarma yaṁsat*'.
34. Dr. V. S. Agrawala, Vision in Long Darkness, p. 192.

35. 6, 61, 1, 36. 7, 95, 2. 37. Bṛ. Dev. 6, 20–24. 38. 6, 61, 3.
39. 9, 67, 32; The hymn 9, 67 has two *phala-mantras* towards its close. In the *mantra* preceding to that of ours, Mātariśvan is said as blessing the student of *Pāvaamānī* hymns while in the present *mantra* Sarasvatī does the same. Sarasvatī is not to be taken here as having any special relation with the circle of students. The *ṛc* is but to impress upon the desirability of studying *Pāvamānī* hymns, i.e., those hymns which glorify Soma.

Relationship of Sarasvatī with Her Devotees.

As to the relationship of Sarasvatī with her devotee, we see that sometimes the worshipper does not have a direct access to the goddess and in that case either a bard[1] or Agni[2] is requested to act as an intermediary to evoke the blessings of the goddess.

Worshippers also refer to the ancient relations with the goddess on the ground that she has been attended to by their forefathers, she is, therefore, called (most) dear among the dear ones (i. e., their kith and kin)[3]. At another place also[4], she has been addressed as *priyatamā* 'the dearest'. The antiquity and hence popularity of her worship amongst the Vedic worshippers is also alluded to by the words *Sarasvatīṁ sukṛto ahvayant*, 'the pious (previous sacrificers) summoned Sarasvatī aforetime'[5], again she is called one who is invoked with a hymn of olden times *(purvayā nividā)*[6]. Sarasvatī would have responded in past to the call of ancestors of the present singer who says: *Sarasvati yā sarathaṁ yayātha svadhābhir devi pitṛbhir madantī*......, 'O goddess Sarasvatī, the one who seated (aforetime) on a chariot and rejoicing the oblation with the Fathers visited (the place of sacrifice)'[7].

It is out of this proximity or closenese of relations that the singer sincerely supplicates the goddess not to drive him away from her beautiful lands watered by her to those which are sapless and barren being devoid of her. Such a request made at the close of the *sūkta* exhibits the terse but ardent fondness and fervour of a devotee for her worshippable goddess.

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1. 10, 141, 5.
2. 7, 9, 5; 7, 39. 5; Cf. VM, p. 96—Agni is characteristically an intermediary between heaven and earth, gods and men.
3. 6, 61, 10-*sujuṣṭā......purātanai ṛsibhiḥ sevitā*—Sāyaṇa.
4. 7, 95, 5. 5. 10, 17, 7.
6. 1, 89, 3. Here we may point out that in order to impress upon the antiquity of the worship of a god; it is stylish with the Vedic worshipper to point out to a long tradition through which the worship

of the deity has come down to younger generations. See e. g., 3, 39. 2; it refers to the hoary antiquity of Indra's worship and is couched almost in a similar style as we get in 1, 89, 3. But it must be understood here that the antiquity of Sarasvatī's worship is to be taken in relative terms. We have pointed out elsewhere that the worship of Sarasvatī cannot be pushed back as far as that of Indra, Varuṇa and the Aśvins because they are much more anthropomorphized, and have taken a number of strides ahead of Sarasvatī in the phased race of their conceptual development.

7, 10, 17, 8. 8. 6, 61, 14.

Is Sarasvatī a Goddess of Learning and Intellect in the Ṛgveda ?

Sarasvatī, who according to her present popular concept (that we come across in the Purāṇas, the Smṛtis, Hymnal and Classical Literature) is a goddess of Learning and Intellect, never appears in such a form in the ṚV. In the evolution of the Indo-European pantheon, if we take Vedic Sarasvatī as a correspondence of the Indo-Iranian Anāhitā, then she should be thought of as a deity who would have been popular amongst the peasantry or mercantile class, being the deity of the 'third-function' and not amongst the Brāhmaṇas, the custodians of learning[1].

The interpretation of the word *dhī* as intellect, in the context of the *ṛcs* pertaining to Sarasvatī, by the scholiasts like Sāyaṇa and others, has led them and others to think of Sarasvatī as the goddess of Learning/Vedic Lore or Muse of Poetry[2]. Though the Nighaṇṭu (3, 9) takes the word *dhī* as a synonym of wisdom, yet almost in all contexts of the ṚV. *dhī* means *karma Śilpikarma*, 'artifice,' *stutikarma*, 'eulogy,' or *yajñakarma*, 'sacrifice'[3]. *Dhī* also denotes intellect (*prajñāna*, *prajñā*) but this is relatively a modern meaning of the word. The Nighaṇṭu has many such words; for example, 'Sarasvatī' meaning speech is also a modren word recorded there in the Nighaṇṭu[4].

Now, even if we take for argument's sake that *dhī* stands for *prajñā*, i. e., intellect in the panegyrics of Sarasvatī and elsewhere, we cannot say that 'influencing intellect' is a distinct feature of Sarasvatī and Sarasvatī is a goddess of Intellect or Knowledge. In almost similar words and style, other gods are also invoked to protect *dhī*. If Sarasvatī is invoked as the protectress of *dhī* (*dhīnām avitrī*), Bhaga, the Maruts and Indra are also invoked in the same tune[5]. Sarasvatī is said as perfecting our *dhī*[6], and prayed to bestow *dhī*[7]. But all gods are regarded as *dhiyam-dhāḥ*, 'the bestowers of *dhī*'[8]. Indra is

implored to bestow *dhī*[9]; he taught the poet (the technique of) the *dhī*-s[10]. Mitra-Varuṇa are said as perfecting (*sādhantā*) the ghee-fed (*ghṛtāci*) *dhī*[11]. The Vasus are perfecting *dhī* (prayer) and *yajña*[12]. Pūṣan makes each *dhī* (*dhiyaṁ dhiyaṁ*) of ours effective (*pra-sīṣadhāti*)[13]. The epithet *dhiyāvasu* borne by Sarasvatī is often applied to Agni, and sometimes to Indra and Soma[14]. The deified *dhī* and *Puraṁdhi* (Bounty) (associated with whom Sarasvatī is thought of as a goddess of Learning) are not only associated with Sarasvatī[15], but they also appear with other gods[16]. Sarasvatī is not the only deity who impels *dhī* but other gods in the ṚV[17] are also implored to impel *dhī* for the benefit of worshippers. Again blessing a student is not characteristic to Sarasvatī alone[18].

It seems quite natural that in all these contexts, *dhī* stands for *karma* in its wider sense, i. e., comprising *śilpi-karma*, 'artifice', *stuti-karma*, 'eulogy' and *yajña-karma*, 'sacrifice'. It will also be uncomplimentary to the god, and we shall be shrinking his sphere of influence, if we translate *dhī* merely as song, prayer or intellect. Every god of the pantheon, we have seen above, is influencing our *dhī*, i. e., every *karma* of ours, that is why he is implored to impel or perfect it. That is, by interpreting *dhī* as mere intellect, we shall be dwarfing the stature of Sarasvatī. Sarasvatī was holding her sway in the Ṛgvedic period on the people of all classes, on the Brāhmaṇas of good intellect[19], on the Kṣatriyas who prayed to her at the commencement of battle[20] and on the peasantry and mercantile class[21]. The *āyudha-pūjā*, 'worship of weapons' is done as a part of Sarasvatī worship even today; the artificers worship their tools and weapons specific for their profession or trade[22]. It is only by interpreting *dhī* in its broader sense that we can trace back the association of all classes with the goddess Sarasvatī and not through the restricted meaning of *dhī* as intellect. One need not, therefore, think with A. B. Purani[23] that the Vedic Ṛṣi refers to some psychological aspect of the power called Sarasvatī when he prays : *Sarasvatī ... ... dhiyam dhāt*; or sings : (*Sarasvatī*) *dhiyo viśvā virājati*, or praises her : *Sarasvatī sādhayantī dhiyaṁ naḥ*, and so on. Thus we may conclude that Sarasvatī in her Ṛgvedic concept connot be thought of as a goddess of Learning and Knowledge because imparting knowledge or influencing intellect is such a characteristic which does not belong to her exclusively.

Furthermore, Sarasvatī became the goddess of Learning, i. e., the deity dispensing Learning and Knowledge only after her identification with Vāk, Speech/Learning. That is, in the conceptual development (as we shall see hereafter), Sarasvatī was first identified with Vāk, Speech/Learning (deified knowledge) and then she became a deity imparting knowledge, etc. Sarasvatī has never been seen as Divine Speech/Knowledge in the ṚV. Therefore, we should not take Saras vatī as a goddess of Speech/Knowledge in the ṚV.

Had Sarasvatī been the goddess of learning, she would have been the most popular cynosure of poets and philosophers right from the Ṛgvedic time. On the other hand, we see that it was Uṣas and not Sarasvatī in the ṚV. who had been inspiring the seers to write first rate poetry.

1. See Dumezil's views on the tripartite social structure of Indo-European Society and its corresponding gods of first-,second-, and third-function. Sarasvatī in the ṚV. seems to be a Vedic correspondence of the Indo-Iranian Anāhitā. Both Sarasvatī and Anāhitā are akin to Roman-goddess Freyja in their characteristics. All the three goddesses represent a character of a female divinity of third function of Indo-European pantheon. Refer to Littleton, The New Comparative Mythology, California, 1966. pp. 7-15.
2. See e.g., Sāyaṇa's comm. on the ṚV 1, 3, 10; 2, 3, 8; 3, 54, 13 and etc
3. See e. g., 1, 2, 7; 1, 61, 16 (=AV. 20, 35, 16); 3, 34, 5; 6, 49, 7; 8; 7, 2, 2; 10, 74, 3. Also see Ved. Ind. Vol. I, p. 401.
4. Rajavade, Yāska's Nirukta, Vol. 1, 1940, p. 393.
5. (a) *Bhagaṁ dhiyo svitaraṁ no asyāḥ*-7, 36, 8.
   (b) ......*Maruto mandasānā dhiyaṁ tokam ca vājino vantu*–7, 36, 7.
   (c) *Dhiyo vājebhir avītha*–8, 46, 11.
6. *Sarasvatī sādhayantī dhiyo naḥ*–2, 3, 8.
7. *Sarasvatī......dhiyaṁ dhāt*–6, 49, 7. 8. 7, 2, 2.
9. ......*Dhiyaṁ dhāḥ*-1, 61, 16 10. *Acetayad dhiyā imā jaritre*-3, 34, 5.
11. 1, 2, 7. 12. 10. 74, 3. 13. 6, 49, 8.
14. To Indra : 1, 61, 16; 62, 13; 63, 9; 8, 80, 10. To Agni : 1, 58, 9; 60, 5. To Soma : 9, 93, 5. 15. 7, 35, 11; 10, 65, 13.
16. With Indra : 8, 69, 1. With Bhaga, Śaṁsa and Riches : 7, 35, 2. With Bhaga, Agni and Nāsatyas : 7, 39, 4.
17. See e. g., Sun is supplicated-*Dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt*–3, 62, 10
18 In two *Phala mantras* (31 & 32) at the end of the hymn 9, 67, which mention the fruit or blessing for a student of *Pāvamānī* hymns, Mā tariśvan is the first to bless the student. Sarasvatī is the second deity to bless him.
19. In 1, 3, 11 Sarasvatī may also be said as inspiring the people of intellectual pursuits-'*cetantī sumatīnām*.' 20. 6, 61, 5.
21. Vaiśyas had a fascination for the proximity of the river-goddess–6, 61, 14. 22. India Recalled : Cornalia Sorabji, p. 225-26.
23. Studies in Vedic Interpretation, p. 111.

Is Ṛgvedic Sarasvatī, the Cradleland of the Aryans ?

The region of the Sarasvatī was marked for consistent religious activities[1]. Such activities continued for many centuries together in the later Vedic period and post-Vedic period, as will be seen later. Great sages like Gṛtsamada[2] (a descendant of Śunahotra), Vasiṣṭha[3], Vadhryaśva[4], Nahuṣa[5] and the like, coming from various families, conducted their rituals on the banks of the Sarasvatī and thus added to the sanctity and celebrity of this glorious river.

Dr. A. C. Das[6] has striven hard to prove that the region of Sarasvatī was the cradleland of Vedic Aryans. Some of the evidence put forth by him lacks force and hence cannot be taken as a final word on the subject. For example, he takes *deva-kṛta-yoni*, 'the god-fashioned region,' to which the twin rivers flow[7] as Sapta-sindhu. But in the context this meaning does not fit in well, because the rivers are rushing towards the sea (watery home—*yoni* made by gods) with swelling waves. He further equates this *deva-kṛta-yoni* with *deva-nirmita-deśa* of Manusmṛti (2, 17). First of all, *deva-kṛta-yoni* and *deva-nirmita-deśa* do not give a common meaning, for, *yoni* and *deśa* are not synonymous though there is a striking similarity in the words *kṛta* and *nirmita*. Secondly, *devanirmitadeśā* of Manu is one which is between the Sarasvatī and the Dṛṣadvatī, i. e., Brahmāvarta and not Sapta-sindhu. But the culture of Ṛgvedic Aryans seems to have the Sapta-sindhu, i. e., 'the land watered by the seven-rivers', as their cradleland rather than 'the region between the Dṛṣadvatī and the Sarasvatī. The region of the Sarasvatī seems to have been occupied by the Aryans later because their advance into India had been from North-West to East[8] and not from East to North-West, as Dr. Raj Bali Pandey thinks[9]. At one time, however, the Sarasvatī was the easternmost boundary of the Aryan-holds. Though in the ṚV. Sarasvatī is, verily, mentioned as one of the seven rivers[10], in other references it is mentioned as even out of the course of the seven rivers, i. e., separate from the ancient Sapta-sindhu[10(a)]. This shows that Sarasvatī has been mentioned in relation to two systems of seven rivers, because it will be difficult to account how Sarasvatī which was one of the seven rivers had at the same time seven rivers as her sisters. Factually, as we have mentioned above, the Sapta-sindhavaḥ is a term which would have been applied

to at least two systems of seven rivers in the ṚV.[11] The system in which the Gaṅgā has also been mentioned, i.e., of 10, 75, 5 seems to be of later age because it has been mentioned only once. It also tends to show that the Aryans had been advancing from the ancient Sapta-sindhavaḥ towards the eastern side, i. e., the Sarasvatī was not the cradleland of the Aryans but it fell on the way of their advance towards the east. Moreover, the sacredness of the land watered by the Sarasvatī cannot lead us to assume that this land was the original home of the Aryans, rather this sacredness esteemed to be higher than others bespeaks the locus of the composition of the poem. It is always the result of a notion that may be termed as 'regional patriotism' that a writer speaks of his land as higher than others.

Dr. A. C. Das also observes that when Sarasvatī has been called *ambitamā* and *amba* in 2, 41, 16 and at another place[12] a worshipper invokes the goddess not to thrust him away from her proximity to barren lands far off, the Vedic Ṛṣi betrays his attachment towards her motherland, the region of Sarasvatī. *Ambitame* and *amba*, the vocatives are applied to a river-goddess, but we know that all waters in general are styled as *mātaraḥ*[13]; Vipāṭ, another river goddess has also been regarded as *mātṛtamā*[14]. The Nighaṇṭu also has *mātaraḥ* as synonymous of streams. Though Dyaus (Heaven) has been styled as Father and Pṛthivī (Earth) as Mother, the concept of taking the country as the motherland is met with first of all in the *Pṛthivī-sūkta* (12, 1) of the Atharvaveda[15].

Hereafter Dr. Das takes a recourse to what he calls a 'geological fact' contained in the ṚV. 2, 41, 17 to prove that the region of Sarasvatī was the original land of the Aryans. From *tve viśvā Sarasvatī śritāyūṁṣi devyām*, he infers, this sacred river has been described to be the support of all (life) which probably means that all animals were evolved in the region of Sarasvatī. 'This certainly accords with the geological fact', he adds 'that the Panjab was the most ancient life-producing region in India......in the famous Śivālika beds......have been found the vast stores of extinct mammalia,......and......the Sarasvatī has her source......in that region. The Ṛgvedic Aryans must have been aware of the existence of these vast stores of extinct mammalia to justify them in saying that the Sarasvatī was the source and support of all life'[17]. There is a little doubt that the

Śivālakas have given a cue to the existence of life in hoary antiquity there[18], but to take *āyūṁṣi* as meanig 'animals who suckle their young ones' is basically wrong. It is because in the Nighaṇṭu (2, 3) we have *āyavaḥ* in masculine gender and not *āyūṁsi* in netural gender to mean 'men' or 'living beings'. *Āyūṁsi* is in the plural form of *āyuḥ anna nāma* (Nigh 2, 7). Secondly, Sarasvatī is mainly a goddess of fertility and fecundity as is evident from her characteristics. Various types of food, therefore, is said to be depenent on her, i.e., on her waters. One need not, therefore, go to the extent of reading geological facts into such lines. Again the eulogy of the goddess seems to be a stock-eulogy[19] of a Vedic deity and has nothing to offer for the theory of Dr. Das. So, we may not refute on geological grounds that the Sarasvatī's region was rich in human life but the eulogy under reference cannot lead us to or hint at any conclusion in this regard.

In addition to it, the warlike activities on the banks of Sarasvatī tend to show that at one time the Sarasvatī was a frontier of the Aryans which experienced inroads from the foreigners living just towards its eastern region.

Thus concluding we may say that the beautiful land of the Sarasvatī being lovable for many reasons would have infatuated the Vedic Ṛṣis to adopt it as their permanent residence but it cannot be said that it was the original land from where the Aryans spread both towards east and west. In other words we would not challenge that the Sarasvatī was the cradleland of the Vedic culture because the activities for the advancement of culture had been springing up there undoubtedly, yet it would be incorrect to take that it was the native land of ancient Aryans.

1. 3, 23, 4, 2. 2, 41, 18. 3. 7, 96, 1. 4. 6, 61, 1.
5, 7, 95, 2. 6. Ṛgvedic India, pp. 34–35; 57–58. 7. 3, 33, 4.
8, *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I Chapter III.
9. IHQ Vol, XXVI, Dec. 1950, No : 4, pp. 320-24. : The Historical Interpretation of the Nadī Stuti Hymn in ṚV. The nucleus of Dr. Pandey's theory is the assertion 'that when certain things are enumerated. the counting starts from the nearest the most familiar and ends with the most distant and the least known'. He further adds, 'from the order of the rivers given in this Sūkta (10, 75) it is evident that the Ṛṣi of the hymn was though standing on the banks of the Indus, his most familiar and nearest his home, were the

rivers Gaṅgā and Yamunā'. But Dr. Pandey's view is not convincing because the Ṛṣi named Sindhukṣit Praiyamedha starts the *sūkta* with a reference to the unparalleled grandeur of the river Sindhu. The *mantra* unmistakably points out that the Ṛṣi does not shower such a praise on the Gaṅgā, Yamunā or any other river as he does on the Sindhu.

10. In 7, 36, 6 we read '*Sarasvatī saptathī sindhumātā*; and again in 10, 75, 5 Sarasvatī is mentioned as one of the seven major streams. But in 7, 36, 6 the system of seven rivers seems to be different fnom that of 10, 75, 5.

10. (a) See 8, 54, 4; Khila 3, 6, 4; and also 6, 61, 10; 12 where it is said as 'seven-sistered', i.e., 'having *Sapta-sindhavaḥ* as its sisters, and *Sapta-dhātuḥ* having seven limbs, i.e., having seven rivers as its limbs.'

11. Haridas Bhattacharya : (K. B. Pathak, Comm. Vol. p. 32) points out that there is no doubt that even though the number of sacred streams was fixed at seven, the individual members varied......

12. 6, 61, 14. 13. 10, 64, 9. 14. 3, 33, 3. 15. 1, 13.

16. Or even if we take that Sarasvatī was thought of as motherland by some vedic Ṛṣis—the authors of the *mantras* glorifying Sarasvatī, we cannot say that all Vedic Ṛṣis hailed from the region of Sarasvatī because others glorified the region of Vipāṭ, Śutudru and Sindhu also.

17. Ṛgvedic India, p. 35.

18. Fresh research has been conducted by the geological Department of the Punjab University with the collaboration of the Oslo University. Some of the results have recently been published in the magazine section of the 'Patriot', March 16, 1969.

19. Compare for a corresponding eulogy of Viṣṇu : 'He within whose three wide-extending paces all living creatures have their habitation 1, 154, 2.

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CHAPTER II

SARASVATĪ IN THE ATHARVAVEDA

The concept of a godhead is met with a change in the AV. The benevolent gods and goddesses who were invoked in the ṚV to grace the sacrifice, or to accept the prayer of the sacrificer, or to give power to perform the sacrifice, or to bestow their blessings and benisons in the form of pelf, prosperity and progeny, or to reward the bounteous and punish the niggardly, are invoked in the AV for the destruction of specific diseases and for the acquisition of peculiar types of profits such as winning the love of a woman[1] or that of a man[2] or harming the rival in love[3], etc.

The popularity of the prayers has been replaced by the spells and the priest exercises influence as a sorcerer and as master of witchcraft. The acts of witchery are sharply detested in the ṚV, as we see that the charge of a 'magician' is furiously repudiated there[4]. These magic practices are believed to have crept into the Aryan religion when they might have got in touch with the aboriginals. The religion of the AV is 'an amalgam of the elevated Ṛgvedic religion and the non-elevated religion of the aboriginals of India[5]. On account of it, one comes across practices which would have characteristically been borne by the poor barbarous aboriginals who are believed to have been worshipping trees and plants, ghosts and goblins, spirits and serpents. But it does not mean that we do not meet in the AV the Ṛgvedic gods : Agni, Indra and so on; they are quite conspicuous by their presence, however, their character has faded altogether, their original significance as powers of nature is forgotten for the greater part. They hardly differ from one another. Almost all of them have become demonkillers here. Sarasvatī is no exception and thus falls into the line of such gods who are believed to have possessed of special healing power or are thought of as scarers of demons and diseases.

1. 3, 25. 2. 6, 130; 131; 138. 3. 1, 14.

4. ṚV 7, 104. One can, however, locate with a little labour the presence of one or two incantatory verses such as-an incantation against a rival wife or one may find a mocking hymn of exultation after subduing rivals; cf. ṚV. 10, 145; 159.

5. Dr. Radhakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. I, p. 118.

Invocations to Sarasvatī

Sarasvatī has been invoked and worshipped in the AV for warding off various diseases. It may be pointed out here that there are a number of hymns in the AV which pertain to the magic rites of healing. They are termed as the *Bhaiṣajyāni* according to indigenous terminology. These songs and spells for the healing of diseases are either addressed to diseases imagined as demons or to demons who are considered to be the creators of diseases. Sometimes in such a context an invocation to or praise of the specific curative herb is also made to get the desired benefit. However, a class of such songs also invokes gods and goddesses to ward off the diseases and exercise their majesty to cure them.

In the magic rites of healing (the *Bhaiṣajyāni*) goddess Sarasvatī has been solicited for the killing of worms. The request is made to her along with the dual divinity of Dyāvā-Pṛthivī, with Indra and with Agni, to kill the worms :

Ote me Dyāvā-Pṛthivī otā devī Sarasvatī /
Otau me Indraś cāgniśca kṛmiṁ jambhayatām iti // (5, 23, 1).

(......May the goddess Sarasvatī be woven warp and woof on the worms for me)[1].

Sarasvatī has also been prayed to for the general welfare (of the infant)[2].

Along with gods, in general, and with Sūrya, Dyau and Pṛthivī in particular the three Sarasvatīs[3] have been invoked to bestow the remedy which may be a poison spoiler (*viṣadūṣṇam*)[4]. It has been pointed out by a commentator that here the Three Sarasvatīs either stand for the three Vedas or the three godessess Iḷā, Sarasvatī and Bhāratī, who are called Sarasvatīs because of their close association with one another.[5] This does not seem to be correct because in this context Sarasvatī, the goddess possessed of water with which she could have been supposed to be bestowing a remedy against poison, is more probabily mentioned. The *mantra* that follows the above *mantra* also speaks of the remedial role of water as a poison-spoiler. Moreover, from the history of medicine, it seems that Sun, Heaven, Earth, Fire and Water might have been the most primitive curative remedies. Special healing power is ascribed to water, in the AV[6]. Thus it is very likely that the pharse '*Tisraḥ Sarasvatīḥ*' refers here to the three Sarasvatīs stationed on earth, atmosphere

and heaven, having water as their chief element[6]. Such a concept of the goddess will then be very near to that of the ṚV where the goddess has been regarded as stationed in the three regions[7]. It is very likely that Sarasvatī who was supposed to be present in the three regions in olden days would have been spoken of as the three Sarasvatīs later on.

Some scholars believe that by the time of the AV, there were three Sarasvatī rivers. Dr. H. D. Griswold[8] says that the AV 6, 100, 1 might be interpreted to mean that there were three Sarasvatīs which are : (i) the earliest Sarasvatī, i.e., the Iranian Haraiṁvātī (the modern Helmand) beyond Kabul, (ii) possibly the Sindhu, as some scholars think and (iii) the Sarasvatī of the Kurukṣetra region. The context of the *mantra* suggests that the river-goddesses are intent there by the solicitor or sorcerer, for water would be best suited to do away with the effects of poison.

Besides, the variant reading of the Paipp.S. *Sarvāḥ Sarasvatyaḥ* for *Tisraḥ Sarasvatyaḥ* leaves no doubt that the reference is made to the godheads and not to the rivers of different lands.

The preparation of aphrodisiacs, i.e., the remedies to infuse sexual vigour would have been quite popular with the primitive physicians as is known from the AV texts.[8(a)] In a prayer[9] Sarasvatī and the gods Agni, Savitṛ and Brahmaṇaspati are requested to make the member of a man taut or drawn tight like a bow (prabably after the aphrodisiac has been administered to him). Here we would again suggest that in this remedial rite Sarasvatī, with her riverine character, is, in all probability, to be understood in preference to her any other aspect, because Sarasvatī has also been referred to in the YV and in the Brāhmaṇas. in the context of the Sautrāmaṇī, as restoring manly vigour[10].

A class of hymns called '*Āyūṁṣi*' contains prayers for the attainment of longevity which according to the *Sūtras* are offered to the divinities chiefly at family festivals such as tonsure ceremony, the Upanayana, (initiation) A *mantra*[10(a)] which is reckoned in this class shows that Sarasvatī is also worshipped with the offering of oblations for the attainment of long life in conjunction with other gods[11].

Sarasvatī has also been prayed to for providing desideratum (*abhīṣṭaye*) and for protection from distress or sin (*aṁhasaḥ*) or for protection in general[12], and protection from men of the

mundane sphere (*pārthivebhyaḥ*) in particular[13]. By her help Vāk is invoked, for defence from all quarters (*ātma-rakṣā*-Anukr.)[14]. Prayers to Sarasvatī have also been made for various blessings, such as increase in wealth (*rayi-saṁvardhana*)[15] or for prosperity in general (*puṣṭikāmaḥ*).[16]

There is a queer prayer made to Sarasvatī by which she is asked to restore (lit.fill up with ghee) in its original form the limb of the body that has been torn apart while speaking with expectation (i. e., because of the apathy on the part of the bounteous or rebuke from the expected donor) or torn apart out of tormentation[17] while going among people begging[18]. Such *mantras* are to be classed amongst benedictions *(the Pauṣṭikāni)* which are but the songs and spells by which prosperity in general or success in all undertakings is ensured to the sacrificer. In the AV there are numerous benedictions for ploughing, for sowing, for the growth of the corn, and exorcisms, for field-vermin and spells against the danger of fire. In this class of the *mantras* Sarasvatī has once been solicited in a ceremony against injury to grain by lightning. The *mantra* refers to the broad thundering (*pṛthu stanayitnu*), an atmospheric characteristic of the deity[19].

Amulets might have played an important role in the field of exorcism. They did not only ensure health and long life to the wearer but in conjuction with various divinities, they bestowed also the riches, fatness of milk and grain. Sarasvatī has also been associated with an amulet of *Udumbara* for bringing various blessings, to wit, increase in wealth, milk and corn[20]. Sarasvatī has also been invoked by *Arātināśanam* 'spells for doing away with niggardliness and its ill-effects'.[21] From the *Sūtras* and the Anukr. we come to know that the Atharvavedic prayers to Sarasvatī are also offered in the *Nirṛtikarma*[22], 'funeral-rites'[23], *Agni cayana*[24], 'transferring of fire,' and in the *Sava-yajñas*[25], 'Soma sacrifices'.

In a long hymn (of 75 *mantras*)—applied at the nuptials, the bride is asked to stand firm and is addressed as Virāj. Here follows the request to Sarasvatī and Sinīvālī to grant her progeny :

Prati tiṣṭha Virād asi Viṣnur-iveha Sarasvati |
Sinivāli pra jāyatām bhagasya sumatāvasat || (14, 2, 15.)[26].

Again, as a part of the marriage ceremony, Sarasvatī is paid homage by the bride when she has worshipped the former fire of the householder. The bride is asked :

'Adhā Sarasvatyai nāri pitṛbhyś ca namaskuru| (14.2.20)[27].

Family discord is also thought to be the result of the influence of evil spirits or malicious wizards. Therefore, we find in the AV a number of spells for the restoration of harmony which are known by the name of *Sāmanasyāni*. This class of *mantras* is to be placed 'midway between the expiatory formulas and benedictions'[28]. To this class belong, generally, the spells by which peace and harmony are to be restored in the family. A complete hymn is dedicated to the goddess Sarasvatī in which the request, in the last *mantra*, is made to her, along with other deities, to be woven on[29] (the sacrificer) for the success in the undertaking (of restoring harmony)[30].

Some of these reconciliation-spells are also employed in the restoration of unity between husband and wife. In the Kau. S. the magical rites in which these *mantras* are employed are called *Strī-karmāṇi* 'women's rites'. Sarasvatī is one of those deities who are prayed in such a rite known as *Prītisañjananam* i. e., winning affection. In a spell (6, 89, 3), Sarasvatī (besides Mitra and Varuṇa etc.) is asked by the husband (referred to in the *mantra* in the first person) to unite his consort (referred to in the *mantra* in the second person) fast with him[31].

A class of the AV hymns is connected with expiatory ceremonies (*Prāyaścittāni*). These expiatory formulae and spells are for cleansing from guilt or sin in the modern sense,i.e., offences against the moral rule or transgression against religion). Or these hymns are propitiatory formulae for imperfectly performed sacrifices and ceremonies, for sins of thought, etc. Sarasvatī has once been invoked along with the Viśvedevāḥ and Bṛhaspati to mend the lapses of mind and speech on the sacrificer[32].

There are a very few *mantras* in the AV which are in their spirit akin to the Ṛgvedic prayers. In case of the goddess Sarasvatī, we may quote at least three such prayers :

Sarasvati vrateṣu te divyeṣu devi dhāmasu |
Juṣasva havyaṁ āhutaṁ prajāṁ devi rarāsva naḥ || (7, 70, 1.)
Idaṁ te havyaṁ ghṛtavat Sarasvatīdaṁ pitṛṇāṁ havir āsyaṁ yat |
Imāni te uditā śaṁtamāni tebhir vayaṁ madhumantaḥ syāma || (7, 70, 2)

Śivā naḥ Śaṁtamā bhava sumṛḍikā Sarasvatī |
Mā te yuyoma saṁdṛśaḥ || (7, 71, 1)

In the first *mantra* the sacrificers say that 'they are in her ordinances (*vrateṣu*)[33], i. e., they are acting according to her injunctions'; and they abide by her celestial laws (*divyeṣu dhāmasu*)[34]. They ardently solicit her to associate (i. e., accept) their oblations and in return they ask her to grant them progeny[35]. 'The imploration to the deity to enjoy the offered oblation and in return ask for the grant of offspring' is a typical Ṛgvedic prayer.

In the second *mantra*, the oblatations assigned to her are said to give pleasure and happiness (*śantamāni*), through which the sacrificers wish to be replete with sweet savour.

The ardent aspiration of the worshipper-'not to be separated from the sight of the goddess Sarasvatī' reminds us of the Ṛgvedic prayer 6, 61, 14 where the devotees of the goddess ask her not to cast them away to far off lands. The Atharvavedic prayer quoted above-*Śivā naḥ*, etc. (7, 71,1) is pregnant with the request for bestowing manifold boons which are substantive and abstract in their extent and nature. Here *śantamā* 'most beneficent' and *sumṛḍīkā*,'very compassionate'the two epithets of Sarasvatī suggest the series of pleasant things being bestowed by her.

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1. Though the lit. meaning is : 'The goddess Sarasvatī *is woven* etc., these words contain the entreaty of the solicitor.
The action of the goddess has been alluded to by the word otā—ā+ √ve+*kta*, feminine and by the root /jambh < √jabh. Whitney has translated this word as 'worked in' and Sāyaṇa in his commentary of another *mantra* of the AV (6, 94, 3) explains it : *Asmad ābhimukhyena saṁbaddhā*; explaining the word *saṁbaddha* he further adds in the context of the last *pāda* of the *mantra—Saṁbaddhau paraspara-protau vā eka-kāryo-dyuktau*'. His words seem to allude that he sensed the word *ota* as meaning 'zealously active' and thus his words *asmad ābhimukhyena saṁbaddhā*' would mean 'zealously active towards us'. But the intrinsic sense of the word has not been conveyed by both the translations. It is suggested here that the original sense of the word *ota* should be retained here i. e. 'the act of weaving on from all sides'. Sarasvatī is requested here to check the growth of the worms that is grind or pound them, as is alluded to by the verb *'jambhayatām'*. For this act of arresting their ill-effect, she is requested to be woven warp and woof *(ota)* that is cast a fastened net to crush them.
This hymn of the Ṛsi, Kaṇva has been used by the Kauśika Sūtra (29, 20) in a healing ceremony against worms.
2. 7, 11, 1 (=RV 1, 164, 49 with a little variation). It has *pāda* order a, c, b, d. ṚV reads in 'a' *śaśayas*; and in 'b' (its c) *ratnadhā vasuvid (*for *sumnayuḥ suhavo)*. The comm. reads *śiśayus* in 'a', explaining it as either 'causing the prosperity of (its) young one *(śiśu)* or hidden *(nigūḍha)*.
The Kausika-sūtra (32,1), in the chapter of remedies,has it accompanying the suckling of a child seized by the demon Jambha. Whitney has suggested that it is perhaps applied in the remedy for a child 'suffering from dentition'.
From this *mantra* we can fairly guess the tendency of secondary adaptation of *mantras* to incongruous ritual uses which can be illustrated more vividly by the help of the *Sūtra*-texts. This secondary association of a given *mantra* with a given practice has often been determined by some most superficial semblance of verbal pertinence in the *mantra* or the like, when in fact, the *mantra* had no intrinsic and essential pertinence to the practice whatsoever. The mere presnce of the words *stana*, 'breast,' and the solicitation of suckling etc. has led the auther of the *Sūtra* to think of it as a *mantra* for remedy for a young one being suckled by one's mother. The corrupt reading of '*śiśayus*' for Ṛgvedic *śaśayas* would have also helped the *sūtrakāra* to fortify his said belief. It is with this purpose and mind that the comm. explains *śiśayus*, 'causing the prosperity of its young one *(śiśu)*'.
3. Paipp. S has *sarvāḥ Sarasvatyaḥ*, 'all the Sarasvatīs'.
4. This prayer (AV 6, 100, 1), according to the Kau. Sū. (31,26) is applied in a remedial rite against various poisons, with aid of earth from an anthill etc.
5. Sāyaṇa : *Tisraḥ trisaṁkhyākāḥ Sarasvatīḥ Sarasvatyās trayīrūpāḥ; Yadvā Iḍā Sarasvatī Bhāratī-ti Tisro Devyaḥ sahacaryyāt Sarasvatya ucyante*|
6. Winternitz, Hist. of Ind. Lit. Vol. 1, p. 129.
7. *Triṣdhasthā*; ṚV 6, 61, 12. The only difference which is noticed out of comparison is that the Ṛgvedic reference says that one Sarasvatī is staioned in the three regions while in the AV reference means that they are three in number. In the case of the Gaṅgā this concept is more precise because there we get three separate names of the Tripathagā (=Gaṅgā, flowing in three regions). the Mandākinī (flowing in heaven), the Bhāgirathī (flowing on earth), and the Bhoga-vatī (flowing in the nether-region). Hence we can say that the doctrine of the three Sarasvatīs is an anticipation of the later doctrine of three Gaṅgās.
8 Op cit. p. 303, note 6. 8 (a) 4, 4. 9. 4, 4, 6. Acc. to the Kau. S. (40, 14) it is to be applied in the *vajīkaraṇa*, the rite for sexual vigour. Sāyaṇa's logic (vide his comm.) that the word *devī* prefixed with Sarasvatī is to differentiate the goddess from its river-nature does not seem to be correct, because we have seen that Sarasvatī has been prayed many a time in the ṚV as the river-goddess.
10. See under 'Sarasvatī's Role in the Sautrāmaṇī'. 10 (a) 6, 41, 2.
11. (i) Also the words '*Mā no hāsiṣur......|......āyur dhatta prataraṁ jīvase naḥ* ||. contained in the *mantra* that follows the one under context, alludes that the offerings for the attainment of long life are made to the divinities referred to in our *mantra*. (ii) Acc. to Kau. S. (54, 11) this *mantra* is applied in the context of the Godāna.

12. 6, 3, 2—we should take '*abhiṣṭaye*' and '*aṁhasaḥ*' as being connected with Sarasvatī and Dyāva-Pṛthivī also. Cf. Mait. S. (4, 14,) 17. In such prayers Sarasvatī seems to be prayed in her concept of Speech, holding her sway on speech
13. 16, 4, 4. 14. 5, 10, 8. 15. 3, 20, 7. Kau. S.41, 8 applies it in a rite for winning wealth. 16. 19, 31, 9; 10—acc. to Anukr.
17. 7, 59, 1. Sāyaṇa : *yāñcā-pratighātena-bhartsanāpraharaṇā-dirūpeṇa Aṅgam iṣṭaphala-prāptya-bhāvena paryākulam āsīt......'*
18. In Kau. S. 46, 6 it is joined with AV 5, 7, 5 in a rite for success at the time of asking for something.
19. 7,12,1. Kau. S.38, 8 uses the *mantra* as a prayer to Sarasvatī in a ceremony against the ill effect of lightning(on the corn of the crops). The comm. takes it as a prayer to the god Parjanya but it is applied by the Kau. S. as Sāyaṇa tells us, at a ceremony for entrance into the Vedic studies (*Upanayana* or *Upākarman*—Sāyaṇa); this also alludes beside Anukr. to the fact that the *mantra* is a *Sārasvata*.
20. AV 19, 31, 9; 10. 21. 5, 7, 4; acc. to Anukr.
22. Kau. S. (18, 13) prescribes AV. 3, 20, 7 in this context.
23. Sāyaṇa quoting Kau. S. says that the *mantra* 6, 100, 1—a prayer to Sarasvatī to give the poison-spoiler remedy, is to be applied when the sacrificial cake is laid on the breast of a deceased sacrificer on the funeral pile.
24. Kau. S. 29, 19—prescribes AV 3, 20, 7 in this context.
25. Kau. S. 66, 2—prescribes AV 5, 10, 8 in this context.
26. 'Sarasvatī' (in vocative) suggested that the bride has been addressed by this name; but in paraphrase we may also connect 'Sarasvatī' with 'Sinīvālī', in the following *pāda*, because Sarasvatī and Sinīvālī, since ṚV(10,184,2) are prayed together to grant progeny to the worshipper.
27. It is to be noted that Sarasvatī has been paid homage and by her side the Fathers are also paid homage. Their association with Sarasvatī is in continuation of the Ṛgvedic traditions.
28. Winternitz, op. cit., p. 138.
29. The word *ota* has been discussed above. Here by his words the sacrificer very probably solicits Sarasvatī to circumambulate him for general well-being and success in his undertaking to cultivate the coveted concord. Sāyaṇa regards it as intended by Kau. S. (12,5) in a rite for harmony. The first two verses of the hymn of course, do not refer to any characteristic of Sarasvatī.
30. 6, 94, 3.
31. Sāyaṇa regards it i. e., the complete hymn with three verses, as intended by Kau. S. (36, 10, 11) in a women's rite, for winning affection, addressing the head and ear or wearing the hair of the person to be affected. Whitney, however, tells us that the Berlin ms. adds '*mānyuvināśanam*'—i.e., the hymn is to be employed for pacifying the wrath. Many *mantras* in this class of reconciliation-spells are employed for appeasing the wrath of a great master and etc. (Cf. Winternitz. op. cit., p. 138-39). Thus Sarasvatī would have been prayed for allaying the anger of masters).
32. This very prayer, according to the AV Pariśiṣṭha 37,4, 1-2 is applied in a ceremony of expiation for the loss of a strainer and again in 37, 14 in the rite of expiation, in case a certain earthen vessel being carried during the sacrifice falls from the hand of the sacrificer (See the comm. on 19, 40, 1 in the Poona edn. of the AV Shankara Pāṇḍuraṅga Paṇḍita).
33. *Vrata* stands for 'ordinance'; Cf. Uṣas does not infringe the heavenly ordinances (*daiyāni vratāni*-ṚV 1, 92, 12).
34. *Dhāman* stands for 'law'; Cf. Uṣas does not transgress the law of *Ṛta* (*Ṛtasya dhāma*......ṚV 1, 123, 9)
35. Sāyaṇa renders *divyeṣu dhāmasu* as 'in the fire-altars designed for the deities–Gārhapatya and etc.' (*divi bhaveṣu devārheṣu vā dhāmasu sthāneṣu Gārhapatyādirūpeṣu*) and paraphrases these locatives with the past passive participle *āhutam*. This interpretation of Sāyaṇa though not unconvincing, yet seem to be a belaboured one and is not as natural as the one given above.

Sarasvatī's Association with Other Gods

In almost all spells and songs of the AV, Sarasvatī has been shown as exercising her influence or prayed to exercise her influence in conjunction with various other divinities, prominent amongst whom are Heaven and Earth, Indra, Agni and the Fathers, though Savitṛ, Sūrya, Sinīvālī, Brahmaṇaspati, Viśvedevāḥ, Viṣṇu, Mātriśvan, Manas, Bṛhat, Anumati, Bhaga, Śarīra, Prāṇa, and Apāna, Vyāna, Śrotra, Cakṣus, Vāk, the Maruts, Soma, Mitra and Varuṇa, Antarikṣa, Bṛhaspati, Yama and Grāvā are also spoken of along with her. In the act of restoration of sexual energy, she is associated with Agni, Savitṛ and Brahmaṇaspati.[1] In a rite against niggardliness, she is invoked along with Anumati, Bhaga, and Vāk.[2] She is spoken of with Bṛhat, Manas, Mātariśvan, Prāṇa and Apāna, Sūrya, Cakṣus, Antarikṣa, Śrotra, Pṛthivī, Śarīra and Vāk in a prayer for defence from all quarters.[3] She is mentioned with Apāna, Vyāna and Prāṇa for attaining long life[4]. She is associated with Heaven and Earth, Indra and Agni in the act of killing the worms[5] and again with them in the rite of creating harmony[6]. In a rite for *Prītisaṁjananam* (winning affection) a request has been made to her along with Mitra and Varuṇa.[7] The three Sarasvatīs are asked with gods (in general), with Sūrya, with Heaven and with Earth to bestow a remedy against poison[8]. She has been conjointly requested with Heaven and Earth, Grāvā, Soma and Agni for fulfilling ambition and for protecting against sin or distress.[9] Sarasvatī's association with Pitṛs is quite manifest in the ṚV also.[10] In a few *mantras*[11] which are reckoned amongst the Funeral verses and are employed in the *Pitṛmedha*-sacrifice,[12] Sarasvatī also is offered an oblation, while another one is

offered to the Pitṛs.[13] In the Nuptials also, Sarasvatī is to be paid salutations by the side of the Pitṛs by the bride.[14]

In the Nuptials Sarasvatī has also been associated with Viṣṇu and with Sinīvālī in this context,she is requested to bestow progeny on the sacrificer.[15] With Sinīvālī again and with an amulet of *Udumbara*, Sarasvatī is requested to bless the sacrificer with wealth.[16] In conjunction with Viśvedevāḥ and Bṛhaspati she mends a defect or lapse on the part of sacrificer in uttering wrong words or keeping ill-thoughts in the mind.[17] To ward off affliction coming from sky, earth, atmosphere, men and the (other) mundane beings, Sūrya, Agni, Vāyu,Yama and Sarasvatī, respectively, have been requested together.[18]

As in the ṚV, Sarasvatī in the AV also forms a trio with Iḷā and Bhāratī in the Āprī hymns.[19] The usual prayer of asking the goddesses to sit upon the pleasant (*syonam*) sacred grass is made in the AV also in almost the same phraseology as we have in the ṚV; however, we have here *'manuṣyad-iha cetayantī'* for Ṛgvedic *'manuṣyavad-iha cetayantī'* and also *Sarasvatīḥ* for Ṛgvedic *Sarasvatī*.[20]

1, 4, 4, 6. 2. 5, 7, 4. 3. 5, 10, 8. 4. 6, 41, 2. 5. 5, 23, 1.
6. 6, 94, 3. 7. 6, 89, 3. 8. 6, 100, 1. 9. 6, 3, 2. 10. See ṚV. 10, 17, 7; 8; 9. 11. 1, 41–43. The text of these *mantras* is almost the same as that of the Ṛgvedic verses mantioned in note 10.
12, Kau. S. 81, 39. 13. 7, 70, 2. 14. 14, 2, 20. 15. 14, 2, 15.
16. 19,31,10. 17. 19,40,1. 18. 16,4,4, 19. 5,12;27. 20. 5,12,8; RV.10, 110,8. Here *'manuṣyat'* stands for *'manuṣyavat'* vide Prāt. 4,65. Whitney says that reading *Sarasvatīḥ* can hardly be anything but a blunder, because the Taitt. Br. alone supports the AV in reading '*Sarasvatīḥ* and the ṚV, the VS and the Mait. S. are one in reading *'Sarasvatī'* here. However one may suggest that all the three goddess are said here as *'Sarasvatīs'*, therefore, reading *'Sarasvatīḥ'* here will be in apposition with the word *'Tisraḥ Sarasvatīḥ'*=Paipp. S. *'Sarvāḥ Sarasvatīḥ'*—6, 100, 1.

Sarasvat, the Consort of Sarasvatī

In the AV some colour is added to the Ṛgvedic portrait of Sarasvat who is though mentioned in only four *mantras* of this Saṁhitā. First is AV 7, 40 which is identical to ṚV 1, 164, 52; save the last *pāda* which reads :

Ā no goṣṭhe rayiṣṭhām sthāpayāti //

Sāyaṇa supplies here Indra as a subject for the concluding verb and thus the translation of this *pāda* will be:'May Indra establish him (Sarasvat) who is stationed in a prosperous land (*rayiṣṭhām-dhanavati pradeśe tiṣṭhantam*) in our cow-stall'. Since Indra is the chief amongst atmospheric gods who are mainly connected with the downpour, it will not be incorrect to think with Sāyaṇa that

Indra would have exercised his influence on Sarasvat, who on account of his attributes in the first three *pādas* of the *mantra* is to be classed among the atmospheric deities.[1] Indra's connection with Sarasvat has again been alluded to when with both of them the deified Bull has been equated.[2] Two other *mantras*[3] which are both invocative and oblational in nature speak of somewhat vividly about Sarasvat. In the first one we are told that his injunction (*vrata*)[4] is carried out by all the animals (and men[5]); in his control stand the waters; he exercises his sway on the lord of prosperity (Puṣṭipatiḥ)[6]; he, Sarasvat as such, is called upon for aid.[7] In the second *mantra* it has been said about Sarasvat that he is called by the sacrificers at the sacrificial rite;he fulfils the pined ambition of the donor (i. e., bountiful sacrificer); he is lord of the prosperous (*puṣṭa* : well-fed and well-nurtured); he is stationed at the abode of wealth; he increases wealth and he is himself the seat of wealth.[8]

1. The Kau. S. (24, 9) also employs it in a rite for prosperity with offering to Indra of the omentum of a best bull; the verse is reckoned to the *'pauṣṭika mantras'*.
2. AV 9, 4, 9: *tvam (Vṛṣabham) Indram tvam Sarasvantamāhuḥ'*. 3. 7, 41,1; 2.
4. Sāyaṇa translates *'vrata'* as *'karma'*. For rendering of *'vrata'* as injunction or ordinance, one may compare ṚV 1, 92, 12 : Uṣas does not infringe the heavenly ordinances (*daivyāni vratāni*).
5. Man is the first and strongest of the animals-ŚBr. 7, 5, 2, 6.
6. May we think that *'Puṣṭipatiḥ'* here stands for Sarasvatī ? For, Sarasvatī has been identified with 'Puṣṭipati' in the ŚBr. 11, 4, 3, 16 and in the Taitt. Br. 2, 5, 7, 4 she is said as *'Puṣṭipatnī'*.
7. *Yasya vrataṁ paśavo yanti sarve*
yasya vrata upatiṣṭhanta āpaḥ /
Yasya vrate puṣṭipatir niviṣṭas taṁ
Sarasvantam avase havāmahe //
8. *Ā pratyañcaṁ dāśuṣe dāśvaṁsaṁ*
Sarasvantam puṣṭipatiṁ rayiṣṭhām /
Rāyas-poṣaṁ śravsyuṁ vasānā
iha huvema sadanaṁ rayīnām //
This *sūkta* has been quoted by the Vaitāna S. 8, 2 with hymn 7, 70 for accompanying offerings to Sarasvatī and Sarasvat at the full moon sacrifice. Whitney, quoting Aufrecht says that this *sūkta* is a supplement to RV 7, 96 which delineates the personality of god Sarasvat.

Sarasvatī and Vāk

The association of the goddess Sarasvatī with Vāk, Speech Divine seems to be in a developed form in the AV. It seems as if the identification of the two would have been effected by

the time of these *mantras*. The identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk is the result of a phased development in their relationship. These *mantras* of the AV then would not have been anterior to some of the Brāhmaṇa references which allude to a more antique phase of development in the process of identification of Sarasvatī and Vāk. For, first of all, the identification of the river-goddess Sarasvatī with Vāk, Speech Divine (i. e. in the form of Vedic *mantras*), would have occurred; as a result of this identification the river-goddess would have come to be regarded as exercising her influence on the field of letters.[1] Since letters are born of speech and again Speech Divine, the Vedic *mantras* are uttered in specific articulation, the device of speech, i. e., mouth and tongue and the articulate sounds coming out of them, was regarded as being under the influence of Sarasvatī/Vāk. In the AV, we do not come across the riverine character of the goddess Sarasvatī where she has been associated or identified with Vāk (both divine and mundane). Therefore, this phase of development which we meet with in the AV is to be placed after the Brahmanic phase which alludes to the identification of the river-goddess Sarasvatī with Vāk, Divine Speech in form of Vedic-*mantras*. However,this cannot mean that these *mantras* of the AV do not play any role to effect identification of Sarasvatī and Vāk or that they with all certainty presuppose the existence of the identification of Sarasvatī and Vāk. For, we see that Vāk in her own right is a deity in the AV. For example, we may quote that Vāk is the rim of the god-chariot[2]; she is identified with Virāj[3]; her association with Prajāpati[4] and Uṣas[5] has been referred to in the Saṁhitā. She is spoken of as most exalted (*parameṣṭhinī*), the divine one, eulogized by *brahman* (i. e., prayer) (*brahma-saṁśitā*) who is responsible for producing what is terrible, therefore, it is through her that appeasement for the sacrificers is sought[6]. But in a reference or two the meaningful association of Vāk with the goddess Sarasvatī can very clearly be seen. When for defence from all quarters, Mind, Prāṇa and Apāna, Eye, Ear, Body, and Speech come to be regarded as deities in the AV they were shown as summoned through different divinities, perhaps to confirm their deified character; it was through Sarasvatī there that the Vāk was called on :

Sarasvatyā vācam upāhvayāmahe manoyujā/ (5, 10, 8).

It is, perhaps, for her close association with Vāk that Sarasvatī

has been called as mind-yoked. Mind-yoked Sarasvatī, very probably means the deified unuttered speech, that precedes the actual utterance. This interpretation is further substantiated by the following prayer :

Yaṁ yācāmyahaṁ vācā Sarasvatyā manoyujā /
Śraddhā tamadya vindatu.....................//-(5, 7, 4.)

(Whomever I pray to through Sarasvatī, the mind-yoked speech, i. e., the unuttered speech, him may faith find today).

The term Vāk-Sarasvatī, according to Sāyaṇa[7], is used to impress upon the deified characterstic of Vāk, that is, to differentiate Her from *vāk*, 'the ordinary speech.' This shows that the indentification of Sarasvatī with Vāk then would have been a recent happening for which the two are spoken of together in a term like Vāk-Sarasvatī. When once their identification was established the word Sarasvatī for Vāk, Speech Divine, would have come to be applied[8]. The substitution of Vāta in the AV *mantra* 3, 20, 7 for the ancient[9] Ṛgvedic Vāk may lead us to suppose that when the identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk might have been effected, the word Vāk was thought spurious and hence dropped because Sarasvatī was then thought of as combining in her person the characteristics of Vāk and the word *vātam* was inserted in place of the word *vācam* which would not have presented any metrical difficulty. We may also mention here that the epithet *uru-vyak*, 'wide extending' of the goddess Sarasvatī suits well in her aspect of Speech. For her pervading nature Sarasvatī, the Speech, has been called '*Uru-vyak*'. (The pervading nature of Vāk has often been mentioned in the Vedas. Cf. *Yāvad. Brahma viṣṭhitam tāvatī vāk* 'Vāk extends as far as Brahma'-RV 10, 114, 8.).

We have mentioned above that as a result of this identification, Sarasvatī came to be thought of as one exercising her influence on the device of speech or articulate sound, that is, mind, mouth and tongue. It is, therefore, thought that whenever there is a lapse on the part of a person by speaking defective words or by having ill-thoughts in the mind, the goddess Sarasvatī becomes angry[10]. The prayer......*abhiṣṭaye... aṁhasaḥ*/ *Pātu no devī subhagā Sarasvatī*......// (6, 3, 2) is probably made to Sarasvatī in her concept as Vāk, i. e. keeping in view her influence on the vocal region. Here '*aṁhas*',in all probability, is to be taken as 'a lapse or sin committed by way of speech,' the basis of such a probability is a similar prayer contained in

the Maitt. S. 4, 14, 17[11]. Thus the *aṁhas* in the Atharvavedic prayer may also mean, 'the sin committed by uttering false speech (*anṛta*).'

We may point out here, however, that Sāyaṇa's assertion based on the Kau. S. that the Sārasvata Sūkta consisting of a single *mantra* i. e., 7, 12, 1, was applied in the rites of entrance upon Vedic study (*upākarman*), does not warrant that Sarasvatī had come to be regarded as the deity dispensing Vedic learning in the AV because the text of the *mantra* has little bearing on the subject of study, learning, etc.[12].

But concluding, we must say that the AV has also contributed in its own way to the conceptual development of Sarasvatī/Vāk, because a few references have a bearing on the identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk, as we have seen.

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1. See supra p. 66. 2. 8, 8, 22. 3. 10, 24. 4. 9, 1, 10; 20.
5. 16, 6, 5. 6. 19, 9, 3. 7. Vide comm. on Taitt. Ār. 4, 5, 1.
8. After their complete identification the reverse is also possible, that is, the word 'Vāk'/'Vāṇī' for 'Sarasvatī' came to be applied. We shall see below many such contexts in the Rām. Mbh. and the Purāṇas.
9. Because the *mantra* is identical with RV 10, 141, 5 i. e., the AV reads- *Vātaṁ Viṣṇuṁ Sarasvatīm* etc. while the ṚV reads *Vācaṁ Viṣṇuṁ Sarasvatīm* etc.
10. AV 19, 40, 1 : *Yan me chidraṁ manaso yac ca vācaḥ*
Sarasvatī manyumantaṁ jagāma |
Sāyaṇa says that '*manyumantam*' stands here for '*manyumatīm*' on account of the reversion of gender.
11. *Ṛtena Dyāvā-Pṛthivī ṛtena tvaṁ Sarasvati* |
Kṛtannaḥ pāhy-aṁhaso yat kiñcā-nṛtamodima ||
Ṛtenā Dyāvā-Pṛthivī|*Ṛtena tvaṁ Sarasvati* |
Ṛtān mā muñcatāṁhasaḥ|*Yad-anyakṛta mārima* ||
The text is identical with Taitt. Br, 3; 4, 12, 2 and Taitt. Ār. 2, 3, 1.
12. The Sūkta being Sārasvata seems to have been fitted later on in such a ceremony as *upākarman* or *upanayana*, without keeping in view the gist of the text.

The Sarasvatī

Some scholars believe that by the time of the AV there were three rivers known by the same name Sarasvatī, which according to them are referred to in 6, 100, 1. We have examined their view-point and do not believe that in such a reference the river is intended by the solicitor.[1]

The region watered by the Sarasvatī continued to be held as sacred for sacrificial purposes. It is alluded to in 6, 30, 1. From this we come to know that on the banks of the Sarasvatī,

the gods first ploughed and sowed honeyed barley, on behalf of mankind (i. e., for the benefit of mankind). Indra in this act was the presiding deity of the plough and the Maruts were the ploughmen[2]. In the ṚV we have seen that Sarasvatī, in her atmospheric aspect is associated with Indra and the Maruts—the two main divinities known for their activities in the atmospheric region. Here the same divinities are associated with the river Sarasvatī. This *mantra* suggests that on the banks of the Sarasvatī, the gods were the first to perform the act of a Vaiśya also, though in olden days they were engaged in acts peculiar to those of priests and warriors alone. Or in other words, the *mantra* under reference alludes to the fact that the region of the Sarasvatī was the first to see the dawn of agricultural civilization.

(Such a glorification of the region of Sarasvatī was the background of Epic and Puranic thought that the universe or three regions were originated by the procreator in the region watered by the holy Sarasvatī and thus in the Mbh.[3] we read that, Brahmā started the procreation in this region. In the Vāmana-Purāṇa[4], too we find that Indra and other gods associate and bless Kuru on the banks of Sarasvatī for carrying on his act of truthfulness, penance, compassion, purity, charity, yoga and continence or sense-restraint).

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1. See supra p. 73. 2. Sāyaṇa : *Kīnāśāḥ karṣakāḥ*. 3. 9, 38, 36; 39, 35; 47, 22-23 4. 22, 24 ff.

CHAPTER III

SARASVATĪ IN THE YAJURVEDA

Offerings to Sarasvatī in various Ceremonies of the YV.

The YV[1] is a book of prayers and formulae to be uttered by the priest at various sacrifices. The goddess Sarasvatī has been mentioned in the context of almost all the sacrifices contained in the YV. In the Darśapūrṇamāsa (the New and Full Moon sacrifices) Sarasvatī is offered an oblation along with Agni[2]. In the Soma-sarcifices she is offered an *audgrabhaṇa* oblation (i. e., an oblation for the desired uplift) along with Pūṣan and Agni[3]. In the prayers of the Soma sacrifices also, Sarasvatī is mentioned as one of the sacrificial names of the cow[4]. In the Vājapeya and Rājasūya sacrifices, Sarasvatī is one of those deities who are prayed to and offered oblations for the furthering of strength (*vājaprasvanīya*)[5]. At the *abhiṣeka*, 'consecration' in the Rājasūya, after the *Adhvaryu* (priest) has spread *carma* (tiger's skin), offerings of ghee are offered to twelve gods, Sarasvatī is included among them[6]. In the Caraka Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice which is a part of the Rājasūya, Sarasvatī, along with the Aśvins and Indra, is offered libations of *surā*, 'liquor'.[7] In the Daśapeya sacrifice Sarasvatī is mentioned as one of those deities who urge the priest in the *mantra* which is read by each of the priest at the time of offering the *saṁsṛpa* oblation.[8] Here Sarasvatī is also a recipient of an *ardhendra* oblation-the twelve oblations of this kind (called *vasor dhārikāṇi yajūṁṣi*-oblations to infuse wealth or glory—Mahīdhara) are offered with twelve *mantras* to twelve deities, each of whom is coupled with Indra. In the Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice, the exegesis of which occurs in three books 19-21, Sarasvatī along with the Aśvins and Indra is prayed and offered *surā* libation. In the Aśvamedha when the horse is let loose, an un-interrupted series of prescribed ceremonies is performed at the sacrificer's home during the absence of the horse. *Audgrabhaṇa* oblations are offered and homage is paid to various deities. Sarasvatī is one of them, the other being Ka (Prajāpati), Aditi, Viṣṇu, Pūṣan, Tvaṣṭṛ and others[9]. Offerings of quadruped animals and those of birds are also made to Sarasvatī in the context of the Aśvamedha[10]. She also partakes at least of two oblations of the sacrificed-horse in the Aśvamedha[11]. In the prayers made to various deities in the context of the

Aśvamedha, Sarasvatī is invoked to grant felicity[12]. In the Sarvamedha sacrifice, the goddess is invoked to associate[13]. Libations of milk are offered to her along with the Aśvins and Indra in the Pravargya ceremony[14].

1. The white YV i. e., the Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā. 2. 2, 20. 3. 4, 7. 4. 8, 43. 5. 9, 27. 6. 10, 5. 7. 10, 31; 32. 8. 10, 30. 9. 22, 20. 10. 24, 4; 14; 33; 29, 58; 59. 11. 25, 10, 5 12. 25, 16. 13. 33, 48: *juṣantā sevantām havīṁṣi*. 14. 38, 4.

Sarasvatī's Role in the Sautrāmaṇī

Sarasvatī is oft-quoted in the context of the Sautrāmaṇī which is a voluntary sacrificial ceremony (*Kāmyayajña*) performed by the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣtriyas and the Vaiśyas, wanting to attain distinction in their respective life-stations. Sarasvatī is offered oblations and partakes of libations of *surā* 'liqour'blended with Soma or sometimes those blended with the marrow of animals in this sacrifice. She is also referred to in many of the prayers belonging to this sacrifice which refer to the legend of Indra, who was indisposed through intoxication from excessive enjoyment of Soma and had to be cured by the Aśvins and by Sarasvatī.

The remedial-sacrifice ('*Bheṣaja-yajña*') to heal Indra was arranged by gods[1]; though almost all major deities, viz., Agni, Varuṇa, Maruts, Bhaga, Uṣas, Savitṛ and others are associated with this *yajña*[2], the major role was played by the Aśvins and Sarasvatī who healed Indra by virtue of their leech-craft. Healing Indra or fashioning his form afresh was mainly a joint venture of the Aśvins and Sarasvatī, as we read that Indra's medicine (*aindram bheṣajam*) was milked[3] for Indra by Sarasvatī and the Aśvins. Sarasvatī and Aśvins jointly effused immortal Indu (drop) from pressed and unpressed Soma which was the splendour of animals(victims) (*tejaḥ paśūnām*) etc. (for the welfare of Indra)[4]. Both of the divinities are said as restoring vigour (*indriyam vīryam*-Mahīdhara) to Indra[5]. Both give *Māsara*, *Parisrut* and honey (*madhu*) to Indra[6]. Gandabhai G. Desai[7] says that 'the body of Indra is perfected by the Aśvins for his soul to operate upon and his soul is perfected by Sarasvatī to utilize that body for appropriate actions.' But this does not seem to be true, because we observe from a number of references that though Sarasvatī at one or two places is entrusted with the

infusion of vital airs into Indra by *vyāna*, (through-breath)[8] and by *prāṇa* she is said to have restored manly vigour to Indra[9], she is equally related to the modelling of the body and limbs of Indra along with the Aśvins.[10] Both stood for the mouth of Indra.[11] Besides, Indra's inner shape (*peśo 'ntaram*)-is modelled by both the divinities, the Aśvins and Sarasvatī.[12] Though in some references Sarasvatī is said as restoring some particular things to Indra and the Aśvins are doing the other ones[13],it cannot be concluded from these references that Sarasvatī perfected only the inner-recesses of Indra. The most difficult task of carrying Indra in womb was also undertaken by Sarasvatī.[14] That is, she framed his both inner and outer forms. At other places such acts as pouring out Soma for Indra etc. are said to have been performed jointly by Sarasvatī and the Aśvins[15]

It is said Sarasvatī treated Indra by her speech; therefore, the goddess came to be identified with Vāk[16].No doubt Sarasvatī treated Indra by her *vāk*, 'speech'[17] but she also treated Indra by her thought[18] and by *barhis*[19](sacred grass) and also kept Indra in her womb for recreating him. So, *vāk* 'speech', was not the only instrument of Sarasvatī to treat Indra. Again *vācā* seems to be instrumental to both Sarasvatī and the Aśvins and it stands in general sense for the Vedic *mantras* which would have been applied in the *bheṣaja yajña* by all the gods combinedly.[20] It is indicated that Sarasvatī came to be identified wilh Vāk (the Vedic lore) not because of its application by her in the *bheṣaja yajña* but because of the continuous association of Vāk with the river Sarasvatī. Hence Sarasvatī though treated Indra by her *vāk*, we may not say that she came to be identified with Vāk on this reason. Had she come to be identified with Vāk on account of it, she would have been also identified with Manas, Barhis and others.[21]

What would have been the nature of *vāk* with which Indra was treated by Sarasvatī? This *vāk* was certainly not the thunderbolt, a weapon which Sarasvatī, in the form of an atmospheric deity, is supposed to be possessing; because, in the context, Sarasvatī is associated with the Aśvins, who are mentioned nowhere in the Saṁhitās undertaking any venture of war or duel, though they have been providing diverse boons to man. Here also both the Aśvins and Sarasvatī are said to have brought Soma from Namuci for Indra by virtue of their wit (*dhiyā*).[22] Moreover,Sarasvatī is said as performing the role of a physician and as such her *vāk* speech, would have been that of a physician. Did she speak pleasant words of a physician to soothe Indra pleading him to endure the malady? The answer is, perhaps, 'No.' It was known to all that Indra had inherent and innate prowess which was lost by him in an unconscious disposition. The treatment of his malady lay, therefore, in digging out his dormant dauntlessness. It seems that Sarasvatī as a psychiatrist, the physician of mental diseases, shook Indra to his senses[23] and reminded him of his previous valiant deeds reciting the ballads written in his honour.[24] It is thus that Sarasvatī might have infused afresh might and manly vigour (*vīrya-puṁstva*) in Indra by awakening in fact his qualities lying latent in the inner recesses of his mind.[25] The bull, an emblem of might was sacrificed to him and thus the lion was reminded of his legendary valiance.[26] Thus Sarasvatī with the Aśvins injected into Indra the powers both mental and manual, through her sacrificial speech.[27] By Vaṣaṭ calls, Sarasvatī, in conjunction with other gods, bestowed on Indra brilliant light and power and implanted wisdom in his heart.[28] In this way the Aśvins and Sarasvatī definitely enjoyed the credit of strengthening Indra through sacrifice[29] by virtue of which the latter cleft Vala and killed Namuci to win back the wealth (and waters for humanity).[30] But at the same time, this act of intrepidity to kill the fierce foe is said to have been effected by Indra himself and that too, by virtue of the *vāk* of Sarasvatī which had given him manly vigour with breath[31]. That the *vāk* of Sarasvatī would have worked to instigate Indra to smite at his foe is also indicated in 21, 39; 57 where Sarasvatī is said as providing Indra with the wrath (*bhāma* and *manyu*) and power. Thus it seems that the *vāk* of Sarasvatī was no doubt the Vedic lore, the one pertaining to the ballads of Indra[32]. It reminded Indra of his previous valiant ventures and inspired into the hero the wrath and self-spiritedness by virtue of which he regained his lost power. The Oriental scholiasts take Sarasvatī here as Vāgdevī[33]. Prof. Weber suggests (what Griffith calls the rationalistic explanation[34]) that Sarasvatī the river, that is, cold water is referred to here[35]. Neither of the two views seems to be correct in this context[36]. The identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk (deified speech) seems to be in the process of being effected in the YV because *vāk* is still an instrument of Sarasvatī with which she is curing Indra[37]. And that, too, is not exclusively associated

with her, because, at another place in the *Sautrāmaṇī*, Indra (of previous *kalpa*-Mahīdhara), too, is said to have given Indra (of the present *kalpa*—Mahīdhara) might and strength by means of *vāk*[38]. In addition to it, Sarasvatī is said as 'the controller of speech[39].

Some times in the texts of the YV we come across such phrases as the following :—

Vācā vācaṁ Sarasvatīm.........21, 58:
Vācaṁ Viṣṇuṁ Sarasvatīm.......9, 27;
Sarasvatyā vacā........ ....10 30.

At first glance it seems that the terms like '*Vāk-sarasvatī*' and '*Sarasvatī-vāk*' are mentioned here. But when such phrases are read with the relevant contexts, they point out that Vāk means a separate entity in these contexts and may not be interpreted as being identified with Sarasvatī. However, one cannot rule out the phase of development of the closenses of Sarasvatī and Vāk in the light of such contexts as quoted above. But at the same time, it is also to be kept in mind that Vāk as a deity, having an entiry separate from the goddess Sarasvatī, did exist in the YV. We see, for example, that in the context of the victims sacred to different gods in the *Aśvamedha*, Sarasvatī and Vāk are mentioned separately. In this light, we may conclude though Vāk had come near to the goddess Sarasvatī in the YV but their complete identification had not been effected by that time, since both of them did exist as separate deities.

Therefore, we may not accept the view-point that Sarasvatī in the *Sautrāmaṇī* is Speech or the apotheosis of speech. Sarasvatī in this context is neither a river nor its water which is said to have possessed of remedial nature for Indra. We hold that Sarasvatī is here a river goddess and hence she is a terrestrial deity. An atmospheric deity accomplishes his enterprises by virtue of his prowess. We do not meet here any marshal characteristic in the person of Sarasvatī. She is said to be bringing Soma from Namuci along with the Aśvins by virtue of her wit (*dhiyā*), not valour[4]. The reference to her 'mighty flood' in the context of prayers offered to her in the *Sautrāmaṇī*[12] again hints that Sarasvatī in this context is a river-goddess. Since the region of Sarasvatī, the river-goddess, had been a cradle for Vedic lore, i. e., the *mantra-lakṣṇā vāk*[43], the river-goddess

helped Indra to regain his lost pelf, power and prestige.

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1. 19, 12; 80.
2. See YV Books 19-21, at a number of places, the oblations and prayers are made to them.
3. 19, 15. The root *duh* here has its own suggestive senseto denote.
4. 19, 95. 5. See e. g., 20, 56. 6. 20, 66.
7. Thinking with the YV, Asia Publishing House, 1967, p. 92.
8. 19, 90. 9. 20, 80. 10. 19, 81; 83; 93. 11. 19, 88. 12. 19, 82.
13. Sarasvatī poured out Soma for Indra, which had been brought by the Aśvins-19, 34. Or again Sarasvatī bestowed on Indra, senses, manly vigour, Aśvins gave food, energy and wealth, 20, 58.
14. 19, 94. 15. Cf. 20, 59. 16. 19, 12; VM. p. 87. 17. 20, 80; 21, 37.
18. 19, 83 : *Sarasvatī manasā peśalaṁ vasu nāsatyābhyāṁ vayati darśataṁ vapuḥ*
19. 20, 59: 21, 48. 20. Cf. 19. 80.
21. Though actually in the Brāhmaṇas we have such passages where Vāk is said as identical to Manas and Barhis (see under Vāk in the Brāhmaṇa-Uddhāra Koṣa, V. V. R. I., Hoshiarpur), they are insignificant in number when viewed in comparison with those passages in which Sarasvatī is identified with Vāk. Moreover the continuity of the identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk only is available in the later literature.
22. 20, 67.
23. Cf. 20, 58. 24. Cf. 20, 69. 25. Cf. 21, 37. 26. Cf. 21, 40.
27. Cf. 21, 48. 28. Cf. 21, 53.
29. Also Cf. Mahīdhara : '*Kiṁ ca Aśvi-Sarasvatya Indrāya indriyaṁ vīryaṁ pathibhiḥ yajñamārgaiḥ vahān vahanti*, 20, 56.
30. 20, 68.
31. Uvaṭa-Sarasvatī-*vācā saha balena ca sa.a...20, 80.*
32. Cf. *Taṁ Indraṁ.. sacāśvinobhā Sarasvatī/..... abhyanūṣata yajñe.../nu stavane*-Mahīdhara/ 20-69.
33. See comm. of Uvaṭa and Mahīdhara on 19, 12, 21, 58; and 10, 5; 30 and that of Mahīdhara alone on 9, 27 and 2, 20. Acc. to Ś Br. (5, 5, 4, 19) also; Sarasvatī here is Vāk.
34. Texts of white YV, p. 228, note.
35. Cf. RV 1,23,19: *Amṛta* is in the waters, in the waters healing medicine.
36. Prof. Weber's view however will sit well in the context of the RV 10, 131, 4; 5 when the myth was of rudimentary character.
37. Cf. 19, 12; 21, 37 etc. 38. 20, 80.
39. Cf. 9, 30. *Vāco-yantṛ* is an epithet of Sarasvatī here Madīdhara explains it as *vāco vāṅ yāḥ yantrī puṁstvamārṣam / niyamakartrī/* That is, Sarasvatī is the controller of speech. Here masculine gender (for her) is an Ārṣa usage.
40. The victims for the former are mentioned in 24, 4; 14; 33; and those for the latter in 24, 5; 29; 31.
41. 20, 67. 42. 20, 86=RV 1, 3, 12.
43. 19, 12; 21, 37; 21, 53 : Sarasvatī with *Vaṣaṭ* calls implanted wisdom in Indra's heart.

Sarasvatī's relationship with the Aśvins in the Sautrāmaṇī

Some of the joint ventures of the two divinities in the context of recreating Indra have been mentioned above. Offerings of *surā*, 'liquor' and Soma are made to both the divinities[1], both of them are said as joint drinkers of *surā* draught[2]. In the context of the Namuci-Indra episode, both of them are mentioned together having brought Soma for Indra, through their wit[3]. Supporting him in sacrifice with strong food and mighty power, they sing his praise. Strong through sacrifice performed by the Aśvins and Sarasvatī, Indra cleft Vala (for the release of waters[4].) and also killed Namuci of Asura birth (to regain the divine drink, Soma)[5]. But from other contexts,[6] it seems that the role of Sarasvatī as compared to the Aśvins was that of an assistant to a doctor. The Aśvins had brought Soma for Indra, Sarasvatī had administred that Soma, mixed with *surā* i. e., the medicine to Indra by means of *barhis*, 'scared grass'. The sacred grass, *barhis*, symbolically is not different from *vāk* with which Sarasvatī cured Indra or from the *yajña* with which all gods helped Indra regain his lost glory. The Aśvins, too, like Sarasvatī are said as having aided Indra by *mantra-lakṣaṇā vāk* 'speech in the form of *mantras*'[7]. Both of them would have stood by the side of Indra when the latter was engaged in the act of killing Vṛtra. But in that context also, the Aśvins were ahead of Sarasvatī in rendering help to Indra. While the Aśvins are said as having protected Indra in his acts (of valiance)[8], Sarasvatī did the act of *upasevā* (i.e., refreshing, etc.)[9] which was comparatively less important than that of the Aśvins.

As to their mutual relations, it seems on the evidence of 10, 94 that Sarasvatī holds Indra as an embryo which had been injected into her by the Aśvins :

Sarasvatī yonyāṁ garbham antar aśvibhyāṁ patnī sukṛtaṁ bibharti /

The Aśvins, elsewhere also,are shown as fatherly towards Indra. But as the symbolism in the sacrifice shows, one may not interpret that Sarasvatī had any marital relations with the Aśvins[10]. It seems that in the context of regenerating Indra, the Aśvins entrusted Sarasvatī with the act of holding embryo of infant Indra which they had created and Sarasvatī was here thus the protectress (*patnī pālayitrī*) on behalf of the Aśvins i.e., at the instance of the Aśvins she acted as the protectress of the embryo of infant Indra[11]. Such an interpretation here that Sarasvatī acted as a protectress (*patnī*) of the infant Indra is encouraged by another passage[12] where in conjunction with Iḍā and Bhāratī, Sarasvatī is said to have acted as *patnī* (apparently, protectress keeping in view her nature of role in the *Sautrāmaṇī*) of Indra. In addition to it, the symbolic nature of this *mantra* (28, 8) is apparent, because it instructs Sarasvatī to hold Indra as an embryo; it also tells that Varuṇa, the lord of waters, slowly brings Indra out as glory of the essence of the water (*rasa*) and as glory of the essence of spiritual knowledge (*sāma*). If we take Sarasvatī here as the deity comprising in her person Vedic lore, the omniscience in cosmic life and Varuṇa, the Paramātman being custodian of the highest ethical principles[13] and Indra, being the passive partner in the act of creation, as individual soul, we would see that this wonderful *mantra* symbolically refers to the principle of functioning of an individual which the Paramātman renders possible through His machinery. That surest machinery is first the essence of water (*rasa*) as life. Life is surely the essence of water (*Āpomayāḥ prāṇāḥ*) so for as a sentient, breathing body is concerned, but, for that life to evolve, a disillusioning, satisfying spiritual knowledge (*sāma*) is necessary before it can recognise its eternal status as *Ātman* (soul) upheld in *ṛta*-(truth and regularity in cosmos). Indra or the *Jīvātman* can thus be brought out as the glory of the essence of water (*rasa*) and of spiritual knowledge (*sāma*) by Varuṇa or Paramātman from the womb of Sarasvatī, the omniscient cosmic life, to be delivered to endless *ṛta*. Thus we see that it is not only the Aśvins who play a major role,as is evident from the discussion of the *mantra*, in conjunction with Sarasvatī to give new life to Indra, but the Supreme Lord Varuṇa, too, has his hand. Incidentally, we have also discussed here the relations of Sarasvatī with Varuṇa. It may also be added here that Varuṇa is also mentioned in the *Sautrāmaṇī* along with Sarasvatī, Savitṛ and the Aśvins, the gods who span sacrifice to heal the form of Indra;[14] whereas the Aśvins and Sarasvatī are once and again mentioned as physicians who treat Indra, Varuṇa is also shown as a physician to Indra[15] but he is also said to be supreme to all the physicians-*Bhiṣajām-patiḥ*.[16]

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1. Cf. 19, 6; 7 etc. 2. 20, 76. 3. 20, 67. 4. Cf. RV 10, 68, 5-10. 5. 20, 68, 69. 6. See e. g., 19, 34; 20, 59.
7. YV 10, 34=ṚV 10, 131, 5: *'Putram-iva pitaravāśvinobhendrāvathuḥ kāvyair daṁsanābhiḥ/'*-Mahīdhara explains......*kāvyaiḥ kavīnāṁ mantra-draṣṭṛṇāṁ*

sambandhibhir mantraiḥ......'.

8. 10, 33 :*Śubhaspatīndraṁ karmasvāvatam*'-Sāyaṇa explains : '*he śubhaspatī... Aśvinau ..yuvāṁ......karmasu yodhanakarmasu Indram āvatam arakṣatam*' (vide his comm. Rv 10, 131, 4).
9. 10, 34; '*Abhiṣṇak-bhiṣṇak upasevāyām*' Sāyaṇa and Mahīdhara.
10. 10, 34. We would like to interpret here *saṁrarāṇāḥ*-'giving gifts conjointly' from √*rā*'- 'to bestow. Keeping in view the marital relations of the two divinities the scholiasts interpret *saṁrarāṇāḥ* as *samyak ramamāṇāḥ satyaḥ*, 'rejo icing in each other'.
11. *Aśvibhyāṁ* (dative) *patnī*; *Aśvibhyām* (ablative) i. e. *Aśvinimittād-bhūtā patnī pālayitrī*.
12. 28, 8. Also See under 'Sarasvatī and Tisro· devīḥ' discussed hereafter.
13. VM P. 24. 14. 19, 80. 15. 19, 85; 20, 70. 16. 2, 40.

Sarasvatī and Indra :

It has been discussed hereafter that Sarasvatī in conjunction with Iḍā and Bhāratī is mentioned as *Indra-patnī* in the *mantras* of the *Sautrāmaṇī*.[1] She should not be taken as a consort of Indra, as Griffith does, but as a protectress (*pālayitrī*) as the scholiasts, Uvaṭa and Mahīdhara, do. This rendering of *patnī* is most appropriate keeping in view the role of Sarasvatī in the *Sautrāmaṇī*, Again for this very reason, Indra should not be taken as *patiḥ* (husband) of the three goddesses in 28, 18 but should be rendered perferably as the *pālayitā devānām devatānāṁ vā*, 'protector of gods or goddessess,' Sarasvatī individually as a physician to Indra and also along with the Aśvins has been very often seen as engaged in various acts in framing afresh the form of Indra (discussed above), including the act of holding the embryo of the infant Indra.

It may, however, be observed here that Sarasvatī's role in treating Indra was at least fourfold : (i) She aroused the wrath and self-spiritedness of the hero by reminding him of his past glory with her *vāk*, the Vedic lore which flourished on her banks. (ii) In the act of reframing the person of the hero, she undertook the greatest hardship of holding the embryo of the infant Indra. She framed many parts of his inner and outer form. (iii) She poured out Soma for Indra which had been brought by the Aśvins. (iv) She refreshed Indra after he had killed Namuci.

At the end of the discussion of the *Sautrāmaṇī* and the mutual relationship of the Aśvins, Sarasvatī and Indra, we may observe that the trio of the divinities that is, the Aśvins, Sarasvatī and Indra, is almost invariably mentioned in the above sequence in the *Sautrāmaṇī*. Its reason, that can be nearest to the truth is the fact that Indra, being the passive partner in this remedial sacrifice forms the third member of the trio. It has

been shown above that the contribution of the Aśvins in this sacrifice was somewhat more important than that of Sarasvatī inasmuch as they had brought Soma from Namuci which was poured out for Indra by Sarasvatī; they stood by Indra when the latter was engaged in fighting against Namuci, while Sarasvatī performed his *upa-sevā* only (i. e. refreshed him). However this sequence of the trio of divinities has been disturbed, perhaps for the convenience of the metre at one or two places.[2]

1. 28, 8. 2. See, e. g., in 21, 48.

Other Divinities in Association with Sarasvatī, the Aśvins and Indra in the Sautrāmaṇī : *

Though almost all major gods viz, Agni, Savitṛ, Pūṣan, Uṣas, Bhaga, Varuṇa and others and the neified objeets such as sacred grass, doors and cattle all contribute their mite to restore the lost energy of Indra in the *Sautrāmaṇī*, yet the contribution of some of them in conjunction with Sarasvatī and the Aśvins is somewhat more conspicuous and hence being mentioned here.

The dual divinity of Dawn and Night (Uṣasā-Naktam) bedecks Indra with surpassidg powers day in and day out (*divā-sāyam*, i. e., incessantly) along with the Aśvins and Sarasvatī.[1] Both these goddesses are, therefore, offered oblations and prayers in the *Sautrāmaṇī*.[2] Savitṛ in conjunction with Sarasvatī and Aśvins spread sacrifice and healed Indra's form[3] Besides, Sarasvatī is prayed and offered oblations along with the following deities : Vanaspati[4], Narāśaṁsa[5], Tanunapāt[6], Agni[7] the Divine Doors[8], the Regions (*rodasī*) [9], the fair formed Dawns[10], Tvaṣṭṛ (21, 38), the Tiger (the exemplar of royalty) and the deified Manyu (wrath-which must precede the fatal blow to be hurled on the foe). Out of these, the relations of the first two with Sarasvatī are worth mentioning. In a prayer to Vanaspati, sacrificial post (who has gods as its golden leaves), the Aśvins and Sarasvatī are said to be its fruits.[13] In a prayer to Narāśaṁsa (who is identified with Indra and Tvaṣṭṛ and is said as stationed at three places), Sarasvatī and the Aśvins are said to be carrying his *ratha* (car)[14].

* The nature and extent of the contribution of other gods mentioned in the *Sautrāmaṇī* has no bearing on the study of the conceptual development of the goddess Sarasvatī, hence they are not being mentioned here.

1. 20, 61. 3. 19, 80. 4. 20, 65; 21, 46; 56. 5. 21, 31; 55.

6. 21, 13; 30. 7. 21, 29. 8. 21, 34; 49; 20, 60. 9. 20, 60; 21, 34.
10. 21, 35. 11. 21, 38. 12. 21, 39.
13. 21, 56 : *'Aśvibhyāṁ Sarasvatyā supippālaḥ'—śobhanaṁ pippalaṁ phalaṁ yasya saḥ / Aśvinau Sarasvatī ca yasyā Vanaspateḥ phalāni-tyarthaḥ/*-Mahidhara and Uvaṭa
14. 21, 55 : *Sarasvatyāśvibhyāṁ iyate rathaḥ,* while Madidara indentifies Narāśaṁsa with *yajña* Uvaṭa says that *ratha* of Narāśaṁsa is *yajña.*

The Trio of Goddesses Sarasvatī, Iḍā and Bhāratī

In the context of the *Agni-cayana*, the three goddesses—the mighty ones, glorified with song, are invited to the sacrifice with the usual Vedic request : *barhir edaṁ sadantu,* 'may they sit on this (strewn)sacred grass'.[1] In another usual prayer the goddesses are requested to place the rite (of the sacrificer) among the gods.[2] As to their relation with Indra, they are said as *Indrapatnīḥ*[3] and at another place[4] increasing the might of *pati* Indra. Western scholars' preference to take Indra here as their husband[5] cannot be taken as correct. Not only that the commentators (viz., Uvaṭa, Mahīdhara and Sāyaṇa) prefer to translate *pati* as *pālaka* or *pālayitṛ* but also if we view these passages along with other relevant passages,we shall see that the relations of the goddesses with Indra were that of protectresses and not that of consorts. Take for example, the following two passages occuring in the context of *Sautrāmaṇī*, "Iḍā Bhāratī,and Sarasvatī are yielding power to Indra along with the Aśvins"[6]and"the three goddesses along with the Aśvins have laid store of energy in the middle of Indra's navel"[7]. Moreover, they also poured out strong Soma, blended with *parisrut*(foaming juice) as a drink to gladden Indra in conjunction with the Aśvins[8]. In these contexts, apparently, they are said to be helping Indra to restore his energy. But in another context[9] we read *'Indraṁ juṣāṇā janayo na patnīḥ* and the commentator also explains it—*Indram sevamānāḥ Tisro Devyo jāyā iva patnayaḥ āsate.* Here, too, if we read between the lines, we observe that the Ṛṣi has explained the closeness of relations by a simile and conveys that they are so near to Indra as if they are his consorts[10]. In addition to it, the phrase that follows the one under reference, viz., *'acchinnaṁ tantum payasā'* seems to be indicating the fact that the author wants to convey his imploration to the goddesses to help him continue his sacrifice, having come close to him, in the same closest way in which they have been helping Indra through sacrifice[11]. That is, here, too, we may not take that the three goddesses are taken as the consorts of Indra. Of course, the logic that 'since one member

of the trio, viz., Sarasvatī, is an established helper of Indra in getting his energy restored, therefore, the other members also should be taken as helpers or protectresses of Indra' seems to be tenable in the YV because unlike ṚV, here the two different aspects of Sarasvatī, to wit,that of a river goddess and sacrificial Fire, have been fused into each other. In other words, the aspect of a physician of the river-goddess has also been conferred on her aspect as a sacrificial Fire[12]. It will not be incorrect to say then that it is on her account that the other members of the trio,too, are said as physicians. Thus Sarasvatī's position in the trio should be taken as more important than the other two goddesses. Moreover, in the contexts the author refers in general terms to the help rendered to Indra by the other two goddesses but he is specific about the mode of help rather medium or instrument of help in the case of Sarasvatī[13]. On two occasions[14] Sarasvatī is shown as associating with the Rudras, while Iḍā and Bhāratī have done so the Vasus and the Ādityas, respectively. Their epithet *tredhā* points out that they are stationed at three different places.[15]

Sarasvatī's association here with the Rudras,the fore-fathers of the Maruts, is indicative of mid-region as her sphere of action. Sarasvatī seems to be the form of Agni (the atmospheric one) here (i. e., in the contexts mentioning the Tisro Devīḥ-*mantras*) when she is requested with the other members of trio to place the rites of the worshippers among the gods. It is an oft-quoted characteristic of Agni to carry the sacrificial oblations (that constitute a rite) to the gods[16]. Again in the context of the *Agnicayana,* when Sarasvatī is requested to be seated on the sacrificial grass (strewn near the altar) along with the other two goddesses[17], she is again to be taken as a form of Agni, because at the time of lighting fire, the priest intends by his prayer that Agni of all the three regions may enter the fire of his sacrifice and hence the prayer is made to the three deities each representing the fire of one of the three regions.

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1. 2?, ?9. 2. 29, 8. 3. 28, 8. 4. 28, 18.
5. See, Griffith's Trans. the white YV, pp. 286-87.
6. *Aśvineḍa na Bhāratī vācā Sarasvatī maha Indrāya duha indriyam......*/(21, 37).
7. *......Tisro Devīr—Aśvineḍā Sarasvatī/śūṣaṁ na madhye nābhyām Indraya dadhur indriyam......*//(21, 54).
8. 20, 63, 9. 20, 43.
10. Such a style was popular with the ancient exponents of theology. It

has been discussed below in the context of the Brahmā-Sarasvatī episode.

11. Cf. the commentator's words : *Tā accninnaṁ tantum avisrastaṁ yajñaṁ payasā haviṣā kurvantu*-Uvaṭa.

12. Sarasvatī's character. in the *mantras* in which these Three goddesses are referred to in association with Indra (20, 43; 21, 37; 54; 28; 8, 18), undoubtedly is that of a physician-i. e. the rank which she obtained in the *Bheṣaja-yajña* arranged by gods for restoring energy to Indra.

13. 21, 37 : The Aśvins, Iḍā, Bhāratī and Sarasvatī with Vāk provide Indra with power.

14. 21, 18; 29, 8 15. 20, 63. It is also alluded to in 28, 18.

16. VM p. 96. 17. 27, 19.

Sarasvatī's Association with Different Quadrupeds and Bipeds

Sarasvatī has been believed to be a milch cow who yields milk in the form of medicine to Indra[1]. Sarasvatī is also one of the names of the sacrificial cow. The purpose of identification of Sarasvatī with the cow would naturally be for suggesting the idea that just as a cow by its milk cures the common diseases by creating vigour and vitality to fight them, similary. Sarasvatī, the physician, administers curative medicine to Indra in the *Sautrāmaṇī*, which is as effective as cow's milk for a commoner.

In the *Sautrāmaṇī* sacrifice, a ram (*meṣa*) is associated most often with Sarasvatī. The goddess is offered the oblations of (sacrificed) ram[3], whereas a goat is sacrificed for the Aśvins and a bull for Indra. She is also offered oblations of the omentum (*vapā*) of ram whereas the omentum of goat is sacrificed for the Aśvins and that of the bull for Indra[4], Soma mixed with (the marrow of) ram is also offered to her.[5] Again in the enumeration of animals that are to be tied to twenty one sacrificial stakes and in the intermediate spaces, with the names of the deities or deified entities to which they are severally dedicated, the ewe (*meṣī*) is said to be belonging to Sarasvatī[6]. How did this quadruped come to be associated with Sarasvatī ? The Ṛṣi, perhaps, has his own view to offer when he says : 'it is the Deva Vanaspati who provided the Aśvins with a goat, Sarasvatī with a ram, and Indra with a bull[7]. The association of the bull with Indra is perhaps on account of its similarity in prowess with a god.[8] But in the case of the association of ram and ewe with Sarasvatī, it seems in view of the context that the animal came to be associated with the goddess on account of its remedial value. Sarasvatī in the context of Sautrāmaṇī has been said again and again as playing the role of a physician to Indra and it is in this context that the ram comes to be associated with her. For example, we have *bheṣajam meṣaḥ Sarasvatī bhiṣag*[9] and also *avir meṣo na bheṣajam*[10], 'a ram(with *surā*)is a remedy and Sarasvatī is the physician' and 'sheep and ram are remedial in association with Sarasvatī', That a ram would have been treated as having remedial value is again evident in the context where Sarasvatī is said to have administered to Indra the ram for the vigour of his nostril (s)[11]. It, therefore, seems that the ram came to be associated with Sarasvatī, the physician on account of its remedial value particularly in the field of restoring vigour and that, too, for the nostrils.

In the context of the victims referred to in the Aśvamedha, (i) the *phalgu*, i. e., a goat of poor physique[12], (ii) the red-haired one (*lohitornī*[13] and (iii) the one of white colour (*palakṣī*[14]-the three types of she-goats (*ajāḥ*) are said to be sacred to Sarasvatī (for sacrifice)[15]. She-kids also are said to be belonging to Sarasvatī[16]. There must have been some reasons for the association of particular animals with particular gods, as we can well see from the following references : the black-coloured victims are held to be sacred to Agni[17] and Earth[18], cloud-coloured to Parjanya[19], dwarf ones to Viṣṇu[20] frogs to Parjanya[21], crocodiles to Varuṇa[22], etc. One can offer some explanation as to why these particular animals are associated with some of these gods, but the real reason behind such traditions in the case of many of them has been lost to us. The association of frogs with Parjanya and crocodiles, with Varuṇa (the presiding deity of the sea)is well understood, and it may be further added that the bright ones with Āditya are associated being similar in colour to the imagined person of the god and the black-coloured victims are offered to Agni, because the god turns everything black before consuming it into his flames but such explanations are insufficient inasmuch as, they, as such do not hold good in other examples. Therefore,one cannot say with certainty as to why the three types of she-goats or again she-kids are associated with Sarasvatī. The commentators do not give us any cue for it. The only reason for their association with Sarasvatī, which seems probable, would be that the kids or goats of a particular colour and structure would have been thought of for remedial value on the basis of old traditions[23], and hence their association with the established physician Sarasvatī would have been thought of as proper. (That the marrow of the animals was believed to be remedial is quite evident from the context of

Sautrāmaṇī where it is said that the *Surā* offerings to Aśvins, Sarasvatī and Indra were mixed with (the marrow of) animals[24]. Of course, one may say with some confidence that the human-voiced *maina* and the human-voiced parrot related, respectively, to Sarasvatī and Sarasvat (her consort), owe their association to the fact that Sarasvatī by that time would have begun to be thought of as closely associated with Vāk. It is, therefore the birds, who can sincerely repeat human speech, were very properly regarded as sacred to Sarasvatī. The hypothesis that Sarasvatī was apporaching the concept of Vāgdevī comes near to truth when we observe that the tip of the tongue (the human organ most vital for mugging and muttering speech) of the sacrificed-horse was offered to Sarasvatī in the Aśvamedha[25].

1. *Dughe dhenuḥ Sarasvatyaśvinendrāya bhāeṣajam*, 21, 34; Also see 21, 33; Cf. 20, 55; 65.
2. 8, 43. 3. *Svāha chāgam-aśvibhyāṁ svāhā meṣaṁ Sarasvatyai svāhā ṛṣabham Indrāya*......21, 41; Also see 21, 44; 46; 47; 59.
4. *Hotā yakṣadaśvinau chāgasya vapāyāḥ...... hotā yakṣat Sarasvatīm meṣasya vapāyāḥ......hotā yakṣadindram—ṛṣabhasya vapāyāḥ*......21, 41.
5. 21, 42. 6. 24, 1; 29, 58; 59 : *Sārasvatī meṣī—Sārasvatī devatākā meṣī* —Mahīdhara.
7. 21, 60.
8. J. Gonda, Change and Continuity in Indian Religion, Mount & Co, the Hague, pp. 77–78.
9. 21, 31. 10. 21, 30. 11. *Nasi vīryāya*—19, 90.
12. *Phalguḥ apuṣṭa-śarīrā—Uvaṭa* 13. *Lohitorṇī raktaromavatī*—Uvaṭa.
14. *Palakṣī-śvetā, palakṣa śabdo balakṣārthaḥ śveta paryāyaḥ* (comm.) 15. 24, 4.
16. *Vatsataryaḥ Sārasvatyaḥ* ; 24, 14. 17. 24, 1; 9; 14. 18. 21, 10.
19. 24, 3, 20. 24, 1; 8. 21. 24, 21. 22. Ibid.
23. Cf. e. g., 21, 29; 30; 31; 32; 42 and etc.
24. Cf. 21, 29, where a he-goat is mentioned as a remedy. 25. 25, 1.

Conceptual Development of Sarasvatī

In the YV we observe that the new spheres of action of the goddess have developed. In the ṚV the characteristic of possessing water was mostly mentioned in the context of prayers made to her two most distinct forms–one of the river-goddess, the other of the atmospheric-goddess. Sarasvatī, though in the context of the Sautrāmaṇī, is a river-goddess as we have shown elsewhere,the characteristic of possessing water is not mentioned as frequently as it was done in the ṚV.[1] On the other hand, she is frequently associated with the Vāk,the Vedic lore (*mantra-lakṣṇā vāk*) which flourished on the banks of the river Sarasvatī.

This Vāk in the YV has become an instrument of the deified,river i. e., the river-goddess Sarasvatī with which she helps Indra to restore to him his lost glory. This Vāk, as we have shown above, is not distinct from a *yajña*, the sacred grass or a Vaṣaṭ call: because all these words symbolically represent Vedic lore with which Indra was made so strong as he could get back his past prestige once again. When once Sarasvatī was thought to be a deity nuturing Vāk,the parts of the body which were used to utter articulate sounds of the *mantars* or speech in general were sacrificed to her. See for example,in the context of the Aśva-medha, the tip of the tongue falls to her share[2]. She is taken as the mouth of Indra in the context of Sautrāmaṇī[3], as such her epithet *vāco-yantṛ* (=*vāco-yantrī*-commentators),'the controller of speech' is most natural. The concept of Sarasvatī's association with old deities like Indra, and the Aśvins is noticed with change in the Saṁhitā. Sarasvatī in the YV takes the role of a physician in the Sautrāmaṇī. The *balakṛti*, 'showing prowess and *rasānupradāna* 'shedding rain', the two distinct qualities of an atmospheric deity are no more associated with her but instead, she webs aroud her person the feminish qualities of carrying an embryo of the infant Indra and nurturing him. On account of her association with the Aśvins she has become in the YV a peaceful manifestation of divine grace who rescues Indra from distress by her wit (*dhiyā*)[4] and not by her Ṛgvedic intrepid succour to hit at the foe in battle.

Her association with Varuṇa here as mentioned above, is also in a new form. She has maintained her old contacts with the Rudras, but her Ṛgvedic allies, the Maruts, are conspicuous by their absence in the prayers addressed to her but for one context where the Marut folk (*Maruto-viśaḥ*)......is mentioned[5]. Beside her association with the Tanūnapāt and Narāśaṁsa forms of sacrificial fire, she is also offered an *Audgrabhaṇa* oblation with Pūṣan and Agni (4, 7).[6]

Sarasvatī has struck up association with some new divinities such as Vanaspati, Narāśaṁsa, Tanūnapāt and is also offered oblations and prayers by the side of new deities and deified objects such as the dual divinity Uṣasānaktam(Dawn and Night), the Divine Door, the Manyu (Passion), the Tiger, etc. She partakes of Soma and *Surā* libations and in this context she is assigned the third libation, the first and second being partaken of by the Aśvins and Indra, respectively.[7] Since she is offered

a libation on the eve of darkness, it is perhaps for this reason that she is prayed to protect at night[8]. Surā-libation is thought as efficacious to impel Sarasvatī.[9] Soma is dear to the sacrificer, for, it was poured out for Indra by Sarasvatī,after having been brought by the Aśvins, from Namuci.[10]She provides Soma as the sacramental ingredient and, therefore, she is said as *dhenu*, 'cow', (lit. the one who provides pleasure).[11]

Offerings are made to her in a number of *yajñas* for desired benefits. The desiderata for which Sarasvatī is prayed in theYV are almost the same as those in the ṚV., that is, the furthering of strength,[12] power (*indriyam*) and longevity (*vayas*),[13] gain of wealth[14] etc. For heroic strength (*vīrya*) Sarasvatī is often prayed to in the YV[15] and we thus come across terms like '*Sārasvata-vīrya* 'the valour of Sarasvatī',by the side of *Āśvina-teja*,'the splendour of the Aśvins' and *Aindra-bala*'the prowess of Indra.'[16] She alone and many a time in conjunction with the Aśvins she has been said as offering heroic vigour (*vīrya*) to Indra. Along with Aśvins, Sarasvatī also generates manly vigour (*retaḥ*) in Indra.[17] All the prayers to different divinities to give Indra splendour (*tejaḥ*). sight (*cakṣuḥ*), life-breath (*prāṇa*),[13] manly vigour (*vīrya*), cattle (*iḍā*), food (*iṣa*), nourishment (*samūrja*), riches (*rai*), wealth (*yaśas*), glory (*śrī*), beauty (*rūpa*) etc,, are in fact prayers to secure all these things for the sacrificer. In the Sautrāmaṇī sacrifice, the sacrificer is to be understood as Indra, for whom blessings of gods are evoked. It is indicated in the text of a *mantra* which reads :

> *Aśvinā gobhir tndriyam*
> *aśvebhir vīryaṁ balam /*
> *Haviṣendraṁ Sarasvatīṁ*
> *yajamānam avardhayam //* (20. 73)

The simple interpretation of the symbolism of the Sautrāmaṇī may thus be understood as such : that a *Yajamāna* can gain perfection of his person and soul through the sacrifice, like Indra, being restored glory and wealth by the succour of gods such as Sarasvatī and Aśvins. Incidentally, we come to know from the above *mantra* that the boons of Sarasvatī to her worshipper comprise of cows, mighty power, heroic vigour, strength, with which she, in cooperation with the Aśvins, makes the sacrificer strong.

Thus we may say that Sarasvatī blesses her sacrificer with diverse gifts which would have been pined for by people of

different strata of society. Or in other words it alludes to the fact that the Sautrāmaṇī would have been popular among all—the Brāhmaṇas, the Kṣtriyas, and the Vaiśyas. It was on this account that they speak of the nearness of the relations with the goddess by words like *naḥ Sarasvatī*......, 'our Sarasvatī...'[20]

The scholiasts interpret Sarasvatī as Speech Incarnate in many contexts without any cogent reasons, e.g., in the Rājasūya when the sacrificer after *abhiṣeka* is made to sit on the *carma* 'skin of tiger' for the attainment of lustre (*tviṣi*), twelve offerings of ghee are made to twelve gods, one of them being Sarasvatī. The context does not warrant that Sarasvatī should be interpreted here as Speech incarnnte.[21] Similarly, in the Darśapūrṇamāsa the context does not help us to take Sarasvatī as Speech Incarnate.[22] As it has been observed above that Sarasvatī's association with Vāk was well recognised in the YV but their complete identification was perhaps not effected in the YV. It is also important to note that the act of conferring (sharp) intellect or implanting wisdom was done not by the goddess Sarasvatī single-handed, in the YV but in conjunction with the other divinities.[23] And we have also shown that in the Sautrāmaṇī,in which she has been quoted copiously,she appears to be a river-goddess as yet. As in the ṚV, she is glorified here also as pervading the regions.[24]

1. In the YV 20, 86 (=ṚV 1, 3, 12) the reference to her 'mighty flood' in the context of a prayer in the Sautrāmaṇī has been made.
2. 25, 1. 3. 19, 88. 4. 20, 67.
5. 21, 19. Here Sarasvatī a member of the trio of goddessess, is prayed along with the Marut folk and others to give power and life.
6. 4, 7. 7. 19, 33. 8. 20, 62. 9. 19, 33. 10. 19, 34.
11. 20, 55. 12. 9, 27 : Where Sarasvatī is being given Vājaprasavanīya offerings. 13. 21, 19. 14. 21, 42 ff. 15. 19, 6; 20, 3.
16. 19, 8. 17. 19, 84. 18. 21, 48; 49. 19. 20, 58; 20, 64.
20. *Naḥ asmākam asmat-sambandbinī vā Sarasvatī.*
21. Cf. Mahīdhara : *Sarah śabda-pravāho yasyāḥ sā Sarasvatī*, 10, 5.
22. 2, 20. Mahīdhara here also takes Sarasvatī as the deified Word.
23. 19, 53. 24. 20, 56; and also 20, 43, if we take with Mahīdhara that the words *devī viśvatūrti* are adjectival to all the three goddesses.

A Note On a few Epithets of Sarasvatī :

We have discussed above the epithet of Sarasvatī *vāco yantṛ*, 'controller of speech'. In the Darśapūrṇamāsa, an oblation to Sarasvatī is offered with the formula : *Sarasvatyai yaśobhaginyai svāhā*.[1] *Yaśas* is food (anna-nāma, Nir. 2, 7) and *yaśobhaginī*(—

yaśobhagīnā or *yaśobhagya*, Pāṇ. 4, 4, 13 & etc.) may be explained as : *yaśaḥ annam tad eva bhagaḥ dhanaṁ tadvatī*' i. e., 'the one possessed of wealth in the form of food'. This interpretation will suit well the person of river-goddess and will give us an idea which the Ṛgvedic epithet *vājinīvatī* conveyed and will be again in apposition with another epithet *haviṣmatī*.[2] *Yaśas* also means 'glory' *yaśobhaginī* will then mean 'rich in glory, famous'.[3] At first sight, it seems that the epithet *tanūpāḥ*[4] of Sarasvatī by the side of *Tanūnapāt* has been cooked up by the author for alliteration; but we observe that at another place the Aśvins, the regular allies of Sarasvatī in the Sautrāmaṇī are also referred to as 'Tanūpā'.[5] Thus, we can say that this epithet is enjoyed by Sarasvatī in the Sautrāmaṇī for her role as 'a protector of the body' of Indra. In the context of Sautrāmaṇī again she is called '*Jagṛvī*;[6] one who is awake' i. e.. attentive to to her duty day in and day out.

1. 2, 20. 2. 20, 74. 3. Mahīdhara's interpretation : *jīvataḥ puruṣasya praśaṁsā yaśas tasya yaśaso bhaginī vāgrūpā Sarasvatī*, whereby he means that glory of a man is determined by the possession of speech, does not seem to be very apt as Sarasvatī in the YV is a river goddesses and not speech incarnate. 4. 21, 13. 5. 20, 56.
6. 21,36 Mahīdhara says *Jagṛvī Jagaraṇasilā svakārya-siddhavapramattā*, 'awake, i, e. attentive towards the success of her undertaking'.

The River Sarasvatī

There is a very significant reference contained in the YV 34, 11 which reads :

Pañca nadyaḥ Sarasvatīm api yanti sasrotasaḥ |
Sarasvatī tu pañcadhā so deśeṣbhavat sarit ||

The first hemistich of the *mantra* alludes to the fact that some five rivers approached (joined) the Sarasvatī. Which were these five rivers ? Griffith[1] takes them to be the five rivers of the Punjab and thus says that Sarasvatī here is the Sindhu. We have mentioned above more than once that the Sarasvatī and the Sindhu are not to be identified in the light of the facts put forth by Dr. Das[2] and Dr. B. R. Sharma.[3] On this very ground we may reject the argument of N. G. Sardesai[4] that these five rivers, which are to be located according to him in the Central Russian Turkistan, are but the tributaries of the Sindhu. Uvaṭa's view, too, that these five rivers are the Dṛṣadvatī, the Śutudru the Candrabhāgā, the Vipāṭ and the Irāvatī, does not seem to be correct because though the Śutudru, the Vipāṭ and the Dṛṣadvatī could be thought of as joining the Sarasvatī at one time, yet the Candrabhāgā and the Irāvatī could not be thought

of as belonging to the system which is referred to in the context. These five rivers cannot be identified with the affluents which join together in the hilly region and form the river known by the name of Sarasvatī because the word *sasrotasaḥ* in the *mantra* warrants that the rivers that joined the Sarasvatī were themselves fed by the affluents. They may be identified with the modern five rivers : the Chiṭāng, the Rākṣī, the Lohgarh-Khāl, the Soma and the Mārkaṇḍā which join the Sarasvatī even today.[5] M. L. Bhargava identifies them, respectively, with the ancient rivers : the Dṛṣadvatī, the Rākā, the Guṅgū, the Sinīvālī and the Āpayā.

The word *pañcadhā* in the second hemistich of the *mantra*, however, may challenge the validity of such an idea because if the Sarasvatī was joined by the five rivers, it should have been known as *ṣaḍ-dhā* (for, with its own stream being joined by the five other rivers of the course, it should have been thought as 'sixfold' not 'fivefold'). These rivers joined the Sarasvatī individually at different places. Had they joined collectively at one juncture to form a river what would have been known as the Sarasvatī, then the Sarasvatī would have been rightly named as *pañca-dhā*. But there would be no contradiction of our view if we think that the Sarasvatī was called *pañca-dhā* because it was thought to have bestowed its sacredness to the five rivers who joined it. That is, those rivers also who joined the Sarasvatī and thus known as sacred as the Sarasvatī were held to be part and parcel of the Sarasvatī and thus in the land watered by five of them, the Sarasvatī was known as five fold. To be more precise, the Sarasvatī with its sacredness was thought to have flowed in those five rivers also which joined it. was known as the *pañcadhā*, the 'fivefold'.

1. White YV, p. 333, note on this *mantra*.
2. Ṛgvedic India, pp. 45 ff.
3. The Vedic Sarasvatī, pp. 53–55.
4. Sir R. G Bhandarkar comm. Vol. BORI, Poona, 1917, p. 94.
5. M. L. Bhargava identifies them, respectively, with the ancient rivers : the Dṛṣadvatī, the Rākā, the Guṅgū, the Sinīvālī and the Āpayā; Ṛgvedic Geography, p. 53 ff.

CHAPTER IV

SARASVATĪ IN THE BRĀHMANAS

The Brahmanical texts deal with the 'Science of Sacrifice'. Their study is indispensible for understanding the later religious and philosophical doctrines. But they record more the history of sacrifice and of priesthood than mythology; therefore, they seldom shed light on the personality of a divinity.

The ancient prayers are sometimes quoted literally and sometimes in abbreviated form in the Brāhmaṇas. The ancient myths and legends are repeated with a little difference often narrated in the discussion of sacrifices, with which we have become acquainted above in the contents of the Saṁhitās. One can, however, meet with new characteristics of a godhead,though they may be very few and still wanting in detail, because the gods owe their significance to the sacrifice alone. Many a time they seem to be dependent on Prajāpati, the father of gods and demons, the lord of all creatures, and the one identical to sacrifice. Sarasvatī, too like many other godheads plays the part of an almost insignificant deity in the Brāhmaṇas.

Sarasvatī in the Brahmanical Legends/Myths

Sarasvatī (broadly speaking) appears in two types of myths in the Brāhmaṇas : (i) relating to the creation of animate and inanimate beings, (ii) relating to the origin of the different *yajñas*.

In a myth explaining the origin of the universe Sarasvatī is said to have infused speech into the beings created by Prajāpati[1]. Sarasvatī, a woman, and Pūṣan, a man, form a productive union. Through such a productive union Prajāpati created all living beings.[2]

In the ancient myth with regard to the origin of the Sautrāmaṇī, the role of Sarasvatī continues to be that of a physician virtually in all references pertaining to this ceremony. However in a reference[3] she is called *bheṣaja* 'the remedy',*vīrya*, the vigour and *prāṇa*, 'life' which she was said to have bestowed on Indra, *yajamāna* (patron of sacrifice) previously in the YV. A ram, an ewe, a goat, etc, were offered to her in the sacrifice in line with the tradition of the YV. At one place in the ŚBr. a victim for Sarasvatī is said to be an ewe with teats in the dewlap

(*sāsanā*)[4]. But why is there an offering of ram to Sarasvatī? The Brāhmaṇa adds that the gods approached Sarasvatī, the healing medicine, with the request that she might heal Indra. Sarasvatī asked for a guerdon. Gods agreed and appointed a ram as her guerdon. The ram is, therefore, sacred to Sarasvatī.[5]

In the context of the origin of the *Mitravindā* sacrifice, it is narrated that many gods relieved Śrī of her different belongings one by one. Sarasvatī took her prosperity (*puṣṭi*) but later on restored the same to the goddess Śrī. Here Sarasvatī is called the protector of prosperity (*puṣṭi-patiḥ*) and bountiful (*dadatī*)[6]. In the *Upahoma-mantras* of the *Mitravindā* sacrifice in the Taitt. Br., Sarasvatī is regarded as prosperity (*puṣṭi*), and protectress of prosperity (*puṣṭi-patnī*). She is solicited to bestow prosperity on the *yajamāna* in the sacrifice and is offered an oblation.[7]

1. *Sarasvaty-eva sṛṣṭāsu vācam adhāt*——Mait. S. I, 10, 5; (=Taitt. Br. I, 6, 1, 2; Kap. S. 48, 18; Kāṭhaka S 35, 20).
2. ŚBr. 2, 5, 1, 11 : *Yoṣā vai Sarasvatī vṛṣā Pūṣā tat punar mithunaṁ prajananaṁ etasmād vā ubhayato mithunāt prajananāt prajāpatiḥ prajāḥ sasṛja......!*
3. ŚBr. 12, 7, 2, 3; 5. 4. *Avirmalhā Sarasvatī*—5, 5, 4, 1.
5. 12, 7, 1, 12. 6. ŚBr. 11, 4, 3,3; 7; 16. 7. 2, 5, 7, 4.

Sarasvatī in Association with Other Divinities

Sarasvatī helped Prajāpati by infusing speech into the beings created by him.[1]

In the ancient legend of the origin of the Sautrāmaṇī (may it be a *Caraka* Sautrāmaṇī or the *Kaukili* Sautrāmaṇī), Sarasvatī continues to cure Indra in conjunction with the Aśvins. Sometimes in such contexts the nearness of the relations between all of them is explained in a way which appears to be rather new as compared to the YV. A text[2] reads : 'Indra is the mind, Sarasvatī speech, and the Aśvins are the ears.' Now their interrelations are explained : 'In his mind whatever he thinks, that he speaks with his speech (i. e., tongue) and whatever he speaks through speech that he hears by his ears. Therefore, when the victim is offered to Sarasvatī (alone) (it is understood that) he makes an offering to all these deities together. Again 'Indra is the breath, Sarasvatī the tongue and the Aśvins are the nostrils. By means of the tongue one distinguishes the taste of food and the nostrils are the path of the breath and thus when a victim of Indra is offered,he makes offering to these deities in common'[3].

Thus we see that the mode of explaining the closeness of these three deties in the *Sautrāmaṇī* looks anew but their colourful co-mingling resulting in any fresh enterprise is conspicuous by its absence in the Brāhmaṇas.

Sarasvatī, the woman (*yoṣā*) with Pūṣan a male (*vṛṣā*) forms a productive union through which Prajāpati created all beings[1]. Both of these divinities are offered oblations in conjuction with Agni; there the author explains that while Sarasvatī is identical with Vāk, Pūṣan is the cattle, i. e., prosperity *(puṣṭi)*[5]. Sarasvatī, too, at another place is identified with prosperity *(puṣṭi)*[6].

In the context of the *Daśapeya* (*saṁsṛpa* oblations) it is told that when Varuṇa was consecrated, his lustre departed from him. He found it with the help of ten deities including Sarasvatī-Vāk being one of them[7].

In the invocatory and oblational *mantras* in the *Mitravindā* Sacrifice, while Tvaṣṭṛ is solicited to carve out the forms, Sarasvatī is requested to be preserver of these forms[8].

1. Mait. S. 1, 10, 5; Taitt. Br. 1, 6, 1, 2 etc. 2. ŚBr. 12, 9, 1, 13.
3. ŚBr. 12, 9, 1, 14. 4. Ibid., 2, 5, 1, 11; Kāṇva S. 1, 4, 3, 9.
5. ŚBr. 3, 1, 4, 9; 14. 6. Ibid., 11, 4, 3, 3; 7; 16. Taitt. Br. 2,5, 7, 4.
7. ŚBr. 5, 4, 5, 2; also Cf. Taitt. Br. 1, 8, 1, 1.
8. Taitt. Br. 2, 5, 3, 3 : *Tvaṣṭā rūpāṇi dadhāti Sarasvati*——;commentator explains : *ayām Tvaṣṭā rūpāṇi Sarasvatī dhārayitrī bhūyāt*.

Offerings made to Sarasvatī at Sacrifices :

Offerings made to the goddess Sarasvatī at the sacrifices are almost the same as those we meet with in the YV, viz., a sacrificial cake (*caru*) ram (*meṣa*)[1] or an ewe (*meṣī*)[2], she-goats or kids (*vatsataryaḥ*)[3] etc. Soma continues to be the popular libation for Sarasvatī in line with other gods in the traditional Soma-sacrifices. In a context[4] in the ŚBr. a certain type of food is offered to each deity separately. Here Sarasvatī is offered '*dadhi*' (the sour-curds) while Indra, the two bay-steeds, Pūṣan, Mitrāvaruṇa......are offered *puroḍāśa* (cake) *dhāna* (parched grains), *karambha* (porridge), *payasya* (the clotted curd) etc. *Parivāpa* (fried grains of rice) is another eatable which is offered to Sarasvatī[5]. As to the reason why these different articles of food came to be associated with certain gods, it is suggested that the deities may have been believed to be making use of these articles of food for remedial purposes, therefore, they had come to be associated with them and consequently offerings of the same were made to them. A cue to such an idea is supplied

by a reference[6] in the Taitt. Br., which assigns *dhāna* (parched grains) to the Aśvins, for the reason that they performed cures therewith.

Sarasvatī is one of those twelve deities who are offered *Pārtha* oblations[7], which are offered for the attainment of food on earth in the *Rājaūya*; Pṛthin Vainya won food for himself with them. In these contexts Sarasvatī is identified with Vāk. With a request to bestow prosperity on the *yajamāna* in the sacrifice, she is offered an oblation[8].

In her aspect apparently that of the river-goddess, she is also offered oblations and is requested not to harm the interests of her worsbippers and bestow her goodwill and enjoyable things on them[9].

1. Taitt. S. 1, 8, 21, 1; Taitt. Br. 1, 8, 5, 6.
2. Kāṭhaka S. 12, 12,-13; 13. 1; etc. Mait. S. 1, 11, 9; 2, 5, 2; Taitt. S. 1, 8, 21, 1. 3. Mait. S. 3, 13, 2; Kāṇva S. 26, 1–3; Taitt. S. 5, 5, 23. 6. 1, 5, 11. 7. ŚBr. 5, 3, 5;
4. 4, 2, 5, 22. 5. Ait. Br. 2, 24. 9. Mait. S. 1, 4, 3; Kāṭha S. 9, 3, 4. 8. Taitt. Br. 2, 5, 7, 4.
5, 4; Taitt. Br. 2, 5, 8, 6.

The River-goddess

The river Sarasvatī was treated as a goddess in the Brāhmaṇās. In the Ait Br.[1], we read about the Ṛṣis holding a sacrificial session on the banks of the Sarasvatī; when they turned out of their Soma sacrifice Kavaṣa Ailūṣa, the son of a slave girl, a gamester, who is a non-Brāhmaṇa, into a desert, saying that he should die by thirst and not drink the water of Sarasvatī. That the river (and not the presiding deity of the river) was regarded as a goddess, may be learned from the sequel where we read, "he (Kavaṣa) found favour with the waters, and 'they went out of their houses to meet him. Sarasvatī surrounded him on all sides.......As Sarasvatī had surrounded him on all sides, the Ṛṣis said. 'The gods know him. Let us call him back.' All consented and called him back." The words of the Brāhmaṇa quoted above unambiguously state that it was river Sarasvatī who was regarded a godhead.

This legend[2] throws light on the social set-up of those days. Happily we also notice that the river-goddess loved her devotees on merits of righteousness and not on caste. As such she stood comparable to the Ṛgvedic Uṣas who treated the stranger and the acquainted alike[3].

It was by the blessings of the river-goddess that Cyavana, the Bhārgavan became again young and won a girl for wife[4]. He was also blessed with whatever food he desired by the river-goddess[5].

In the Taitt. Br. we come across two prayers[6] who are addressed to the river goddess. The river-goddess, one rich in food, is requested in the first *mantra* to smear the face of the worshipper with honey (i. e., the savour of life) which is contained amongst bulls and steeds. In the second *mantra* the goddess is called as *vaiśambhalyā*[7], 'one who nurtures the people.' She is solicited to bestow enjoyable things and her blessings are evoked for the enjoyment of her (tasteful) waters. In the Mait. S.[8] and the Kaṭha. S.[9] we meet with a prayer which is somewhat similar to the second *mantra* (i. e. Taitt. Br. 2, 5, 8, 7). In the Mait. S. Sarasvatī is addressed as *patnī* 'the protectress' and this world is said to be belonging to her. She is therefore, called *veśa-yamani*, 'the controller of the people.'[10] After having been offered respectful salutations, she is requested not to harm the worshippers (naturally by her flooded waters).

As Rudra with malevolent characteristics is called Śiva in order to avert his great malevolence[13], Sarasvatī with capability[12] to work havoc by virtue of her flood is called *veśa-bhaginī* and *veśabhaginā*, i.e., 'one containing sisterly affection for the people'[14]. She is also offered oblation in the similar capacity.

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1. 2, 19. 2. Śāṅ. Br. 12, 3. Here the Ṛṣis who gathered together for sacrifice are styled as Madhyamas.
3. ṚV 1. 124, 6 : '*Nājāmiṁ na pari vṛnakti jāmim*'.
4. At his own instance, the sons of Cyavana carried him to the Sarasvatī- Jai Br. 3, 120; Tāṇḍya Br. 22, 14, 2.
5. Cyavana's achievements were the result of his knowledge of the Vastupaśya Brāhmaṇa—Jai Br. 3, 120.
6.(i) *Yad apsu te Sarasvatī / Goṣv–aśveṣu yan madhu /*
Tena me vājinīvati / Mukham andhi Sarasvatī / 2, 5, 8, 6.
(ii) *Yā Sarasvatī Vaiśambhalyā/ Tasyāṁ me rāsva /*
Tasyās te bhakṣiya / Tasyās te bhūyiṣṭha-bhājo bhūyāsma / Ibid., 7.
7.(i) *Viśam prajānām bharaṇaṁ poṣaṇaṁ Viśambhalaṁ tat, kartuṁ kṣamā vaiśambhalyā*' —*Sāyaṇa* (ii) Āp. ŚS (4, 14, 4) has the variant '*Vaiśambalyā*', '*balyā*, we think is '*varyā*'; on account of the regional variation of the sounds i. e. '*ba*' for '*va*' and '*la*' for '*ra*'. Then it would mean *viśaṁ prajānām varaṇam.viśamvaram tat karttum kṣmā vaiśaṁ-varyā vaiśaṁbalyā vā*'.
8. 1, 4, 3. 9. 5, 4.
10. The comm. is wrong when he translates '*Veśa-yamani*' as '*vastradātrī*' 'the giver of the clothes' etc. vide comm. on Vā. ŚS. 1, 4, 4, 41.

11. (i) *Patnī patnyeṣā te loko namaste astu, mā mā hiṁsir—/*
(ii) Cf. ṚV 6, 61, 14 : *payasā mā na ā dhak.* 12. RV. 10, 92, 9.
13. See RV 1, 114, 7; 8; 2, 33, 11; 14.
14. Āp. ŚS. (3, 10, 2; 4, 13, 7) reads *viśo–bhaginā* here.

The River Sarasvatī :

The waters of the Sarasvatī were held sacred and used at the time of consecration in the *Rājasūya* ceremony[1]. Ceremonies or the session of ceremonies known as the *Sārasvata-sattras* were performed on the banks of the river as part of which people had been undertaking the *pratiloma yātrā*, 'sojourn from the spot of its disappearance to the source' and performing *yajñas* at different stages[2].

The spot where she Sarasvatī lost itself into the sands was known as Vinaśana[3]. *Yajña* was performed on the southern[4] side of the river at this place. The other sacred spot was the place where the Sarasvatī joined the Dṛṣadvatī. This confluence was known as Dṛṣadvatyāpyaya or Āpyaya[5]. The source of the Sarasvatī which was situated at a place known as Plakṣa-prasravaṇa[6] was another sacred spot for the performance of sacrifices. The *avabhṛtha* 'bathing at the end of a principal sacrifice'[7], was often taken at this place and the *Kāmyā-iṣṭi* 'oblation consisting of butter and food etc., offered for some particular object and with a view to future fruition' was also offered here[8]. It was considered to be heaven itself, in fact[4]. It was situated at a distance equivalent to fortyfour *āśvinas* from Vinaśana[10].

The region of the Sarasvatī continued to be a cradle for Vedic culture in the Brāhmaṇas, because we see that Māṭhava, the Videgha started from the Sarasvatī towards the east carrying the Vedic Agni in his mouth. In other words, the Vedic culture that thrived on the banks of the sacred river Sarasvatī was carried by the votaries to the different distant lands particularly towards the east[11]. In another text we notice the presence of Namī Sāpya, a king of Videha in that holy land, where are situated the Sarasvatī river and Kurukṣetra[12] and the Naimiṣa and Khāṇḍava forests[13]. Similarly, we meet ~~here Kusurabinda~~, son of Uddālaka, of northern Kosala[14].

How sacred is Kurukṣetra, the land watered by Sarasvatī, is known by an interesting legend in the Tāṇḍya Br[15] Indra once made a bet with Ruśmā that whoever of the them first ran round the earth should be the winner, "Indra ran around the earth. Ruśmā ran around Kurukṣetra. She said, 'I have con-

quered you' and he said, 'It is I who have conquered you'' They asked the gods;and the gods said,'Kurukṣetra is as great as the altar of Prajāpati, so neither of the two won.''

1. Taitt. Br, 1, 8, 2, 5; Mait, S. 2, 1, 7; 2, 3, 5; 4, 3, 9.
2. Taṇdya Br. 25, 10. 3. Sāyaṇa's comm. on Tāṇdya Br. 25, 10, 1.
4. Lāṭ ŚS 10, 15, 1. 5. Taṇdya Br. 25, 10, 15.
6. It is variently written as Plākṣa-Prasravaṇa, Plākṣa-Prāsravaṇa (—Śravaṇa) and Prākṣa-prasravaṇa-Jai. Br. 2, 298.
7. Such a bath was taken by a king of Videha, Nami by name : Tāṇḍya Br. 25, 10, 17-18. But it was taken also at Kārapacava on the banks of the Yamunā near the Sarasvatī .....ibid., 23. (also La ŚS 10, 17, 10; 11). 8, Tāṇḍya Br. 25, 10, 22, 9. Jai. Br. 2, 298.
10. Tāṇḍya Br. 25, 10, 26. *Aśvina* may mean distance lying between the two stages. Sāyaṇa says : *Ekenāshoratreṇa yāvantam adhvānam gacchati tāvān–ekāśvinaḥ.* 11. ŚBr. 1, 4, 1, 14. 12. Tāṇḍya Br. 25, 10, 17.
13. Tāṇḍya Br. 25, 6, 4. 14. Taitt. S. 7, 2, 2, 1; to be read with Mbh. 9, 38, 22-24. 15. 25, 10.

Sarasvat

Sarasvat is quite a colourless deity in the Brāhmaṇs. He forms a pair with Sarasvatī[1]. One mess of rice, which is often kept in twelve potsheds and is thus called *dvādaśa-kapālaḥ*[2], is offered to him on a full moon day, while the other is offered to Sarasvatī on a new moon day[3]. He is identified with Mind, '*Mana*', while Sarasvatī is identified with speech, '*Vāk*'. Sarasvat is substituted by Indra in other references where he is identified with Mind, while Sarasvatī with Speech[4].

Sarasvat is identified with the celestial region, *(svargo lokaḥ)* while Sarasvatī is identified with Speech (Vāk),[5] Sarasvat is identified with Pūrṇamāsa, 'full moonday' while Sarasvatī with Amāvāsyā'the fifteenth day of the dark half of the lunar month.[6] *Satyavāk*, 'one true to his word' or 'one of truthful speech' is an epithet which is shared by both Sarasvati and Sarasat[7]

1. Tāṇḍya Br. 16. 5, 3, 4; Jai. Br. 2, 185. 2. G. Br. 2, 1, 12. 3. ŚBr. 11, 2, 4, 9; 2, 6, 3; Taitt. Br. ', 6, 1, 1I. 4. ŚBr. 12, 9, 1, 13; 14.
5. Tāṇḍya Br. 16, 5, 15; 16. Taitt. S. 3, 5, 1, 4; Mait. S. 1, 4, 15; GBr. 2, 1, 12. At another place in Mait. S. 4. 2, 7; he is said as *Saṁvatsara*, the Year.
6. See Taitt. Br. 2, 5, 4, 6; Mait. S. 2, 7, 13; 4, 12, 6-
7. Taitt. Br. 1, 8, 3, 4; Maitt. S. 1, 8, 19.

Vāg Vai Sarasvatī

We have already observed above that the identification of Vāk with Sarasvatī took place in the Brāhmaṇas or in the later Saṁhitās (some of the portions of which are supposed to be contemporaneous with the Brāhmaṇas). In a ritualistic scheme it was most natural to attach importance to Vāk, 'Speech' and thus we see that Vāk has often been identified with different ingredients of *yajña*[1]. This Vāk may be styled as *Aparā Vāk*, one of substantive nature, based on words and sound. But Vāk often appears in a number of cosmogonic legends also; in this form she may be styled as *Parā Vāk*. She is at the root of creation and Prajāpati is often said to have created the universe with Vāk as his instrument of creation. In some legends Vāk is the first or second progeny[2] and in others his wife[3]. In Jai. Br. Vāk is said to be the first thing in existence. Vāk intended to perform a sacrifice and poured her splendour which ultimately turned into twelve months and increased the number to thirty which transformed into days from which the year cycle was born and it became the first *yajña*[4]. According to a legend occurring in the Kāṇva S., Kāṭhaka S. and Kauṣītaki Br., Vāk is the consort of Prajāpati. Vāk became pregnant and bore Soma as the first offspring, after having given birth to Soma, Vāk entered into Prajāpati[5]. Vāk has been described as the Supreme Brahma and is to be addressed as the Queen and the Vedas and other branches of learning are said to have been born as attendants of Vāk[6]. In another legend Vāk has been called the starting day and subsequently the starting point in the time cycle and also the initiator of sacrificial activity, and as such is the seat of every manifestation[7]. Prajāpati created Vāk, Vāk in turn created the cow and for the maintenance of this cow, he created eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, and twelve Ādityas[8]. Each of these groups kept the cow for a year and with her help multiplied into the manifold manifestations of cosmos. The gradual process of creation of the earth from the aquatic Vāk and of the space from the earth and of the heaven from the space is the theme of another legend in Jai. Br[9]. With Vāk for shovel, the *devas* dug out the *ṛcs*, the *Yajus* formulas and the *Sāmans*. i. e., the *Veda-trayī* (the Triple Science, the Three Vedas)[10]. In all these legends Vāk is the latent creative power.

The cosmic character of Vāk is also revealed in her association with Prāṇa[11] (the life-breath) with whom she has been

identified[12]. She is Ekākṣarā, i. e., Om[13]. She is Brahma[14], Subrahma[15], one stationed in the heart (*hṛdaye paritiṣṭhitā*)[16]. Vāk is Virāṭ[17].

The cosmic characteristics of Vāk have been given here succinctly as they are important with regard to the study of the evolution of the identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk. They are the cause or the result of the identification of the two goddesses. In other words, it cannot be said with certainty that the fusion of the characteristics of both the goddesses had occurred as a result of the identification of the two or their identification may have been effected for the mutual fusion of their characteristics. The latter seems more probable because similarity of characteristics might have led to their identification to begin with and later on one of the two goddesses represented a personality comprising the characteristics of both of them. For example, when we say that Sarasvatī is Vāk, it would mean that Sarasvatī is Speech Incarnate, the Word, the Creative Force, etc.

Though Vāk in the form of Vedic *mantras* i. e. *Mantrarūpā* Vāk, is a part of the *Parā Vāk*, which is *Akṣara*, the Indestructible[18], its substantive form is met with in a number of contexts in the Brāhmaṇas. The *Mantrarūpā Vāk* touches the sphere of intellect and is thus equated with a number of metres, poets and priests, the altar, the *Vaṣat-calls*, the *Svāhākāra* (utterance of exclamation *svāhā*) the sacrificial fire, etc. This Vāk has sound (*dhvani*) and word (*śabda*) as its basic elements. The sphere of action of this *Vāk* is the terrestrial world. She is equated with *yajña*[19]. She milks out all desires for the sacrificer[20]. She was the food for the sustenance of gods in the days of antiquity[21]. With Vāk one upholds cattle[22]; Vāk is thus prosperity (*puṣṭi*)[23].

Vāk in a number of Vāk-Soma legends of the Brāhmaṇas[24] is different from Vāk of the cosmosgonic legends. Here it is the female aspect or more precisely the instrument rather than ultimate end; by bartering her to a divine state, exhilaration (Soma) is secured. Instead of being the summum bonum, Vāk is the most potent means for excellence to achieve such a state. Vāk here in her *Aparā* form may not be taken as mere activity of speech, it seems to be the power of sacred speech which corresponds to the *Paśyanti* of the *Āgama* tradition. We have thus noticed in the Brāhmaṇas two forms of Vāk, the *Parā* and the *Aparā*.

Sarasvatī in several Brahmāṇa passages has been identified with Vāk[25] The identification of the two is shown mostly by the following words : (i) *Vāg vai Sarasvati*, (iii) *Vāg eva Sarasvatī*, and (iii) *Vāk Sarasvatī*.

The first two phrases, i. e., *Vāg vai Sarasvatī*' and '*Vāg eva Sarasvatī*, are but to emphasise the oneness (in meaning) of the two words[26]. The term Sarasvatī is appended to Vāk in order to highlight the divine character of Vāk or to show that Sarasvatī the Vāg-devatā is intended in the context and not Sarasvatī, the river or river-goddess. In order to make it more clear, we may take, for example, the following *mantra* :

Praṇāya svāhā Vyānāya svāhā ṣpānāya svāhā |
Cakṣuse svāhā Śrotrāya svāhā |
Manase svāhā Vāce Sarasvatyai svāhā |
Dakṣāya svāhā Kratave svāhā | (Taitt. Ār. 4, 5, 1).[27]

Here Sarasvatī is appended to Vāk in order to underline the divinity of Vāk in the context. In other words, it is shown that in the context Vāk, the tongue, mouth or the faculty of speech is not intended here, but the '*Śabdātmikā Vāgdevatā*' (the goddess Speech having words as her person)[28]. *Prāṇam Vyānam Apānam*, ...etc. are all deified here. But to Vāk the author has appended 'Sarasvati' because he wants to distinguish the divine Vāk (*daivi Vāk*) from human *vāk* (*mānuṣī Vāk*)[29]. In the same manner we shall interpret *Vācam Sarasvatīm svāhākāreṇa parigṛhṇīyāt*, 'he may take hold of Vāk Sarasvatī by the utterance of *svāhā*.'[30] Similarly, where we get phrases like *Sarasvati Vāk* or *Sarasvatyā Vacā*, etc.[31], we would understand that Sarasvatī the Vāgdevatā is intended and not Sarasvatī, the river or river-goddess.

These identifications in the Brāhmaṇas are given in order to explain the meaning of the Vedic texts, more explicitly in the context of the ritual. If we collect all such identifications, we shall have a large number of synonyms of a single word. But such synonyms are meaningful only in their respective contexts.

Now we shall see as to which form of Vāk (the *Parā Vāk* or *Aparā Vāk*) came to be identified with which form of Sarasvatī (the transcendent atmospheric goddess or the terrestrial river-goddess). One observes no difficulty in thinking that the *Parā Vāk* may have been identified with the transcendent form of the goddess Sarasvatī, the form which is depicted in the cosmogonic

legends, wherein Sarasvatī is said to be at the root of creation[32] or equated with the primordial waters[33].

On the other hand, the *Aparā Vāk*, i. e., the *Mantrarūpā*-Vāk, came to be idenfified with the river-goddess Sarasvatī. The validity of such an idea is proved by certain references in the Brāhmaṇas which allude to the identification of the river-goddess Sarasvatī with *Mantrarūpā* Vāk. For example, we read in the context of the 'Preparation of waters for consecration' *Sa Sārasvatīreva prathmā gṛhṇātī /......tābhirabhiṣiñcati vāgvaī Sarasvatī vācaivainametadabhiṣiñcati......* "He first takes (water) from the (river) Sarasvatī......Therewith he sprinkles him,......Sarasvatī being (the goddess of) Speech it is with Speech he thereby sprinkles him"[34] We further have in this context......*na juhoti/ Sārasvatīṣu*············*//*[35] *Atha yat Sārasvatīṣu na juhoti/ vāgvaī Sarasvatī vajra ājyam ned vajı eṇājyena vācam hinasanīti tasmāt Sārasvatīṣu na juhoti//*[36]. "He does not offer on the waters from the Sarasvatī......And as to why he does not offer on (the water) from the Sarasvatī......Sarasvatī to be sure, is (the goddess of) Speech, and ghee is the thunder-bolt. 'Lest I should injure (the goddess of) Speech'. Thus he thinks and, therefore he does not offer on the water from the Sarasvatī"[37]. Again in Jai. Br. we read in the context of the offerings of Soma-'*Tāsām Sarasvatyā upamajjane dīkṣā; dakṣine tīre dīkṣānte/......Sarsavtyā yanti, Vāg vai Sarasvatī.,,* "Their initiation is done after the completion of bath in the Sarasvatī, which is taken on the right bank at the completion of intiation ceremony. They approach Sarasvatī. Sarasvatī indeed is speech." Thus here we find that the identification of the river-goddess Sarasvatī (because the Sarasvatī river is the river-goddess, as we have observed above) with *Mantrarūpā* Vāk, the speech of the the seers is spoken of in straight terms. The association between the *Mantrarūpā* Vāk and the river-goddess Sarasvatī for a very long time seems to be a very potent reason which would have led to their identification. In the Brāhmaṇas, 'close-association' is the basic reason for most of the identifications[39].

Similarity in the characteristics of the two goddesses would have also led to their identification[40]. But such a similarity in characteristics is met with only between the atmospheric Vāk and the atmospheric goddess Sarasvatī, because both of them possess the aquatic aspect. We have observed above that there is a consistent emphasis on the aquatic aspect of Vāk in the ṚV and it has been retained in the Brāhmaṇas also where we read:

'Ocean (*Samudra*), verily, is Vāk; neither Vāk nor the ocean diminishes.[41] Vāk seems to be, as such, an 'abstract representation of the aquatic element (the seed of the cosmos)[42]. In the reference of the Taitt. Br.[43]...'*Eṣā vā apām pṛṣṭham yat Sarasvatī*,' we may take that Sarasvatī, too, is spoken of as being at the root of all Primordial waters. Thus the identification of the two goddesses does not present any difficulty when both have water as their common characteristic. But such an identification has not been explicitly alluded to in the Brahmanical texts, whereas the identification of the *Mantrarūpā* Vāk with the river-goddess Sarasvatī has been mentioned in unambiguous terms in some passages, as we have seen above. Moreover, the identification of the latter type plays a more significant role in the phase of the conceptual development of Sarasvatī. For, Sarasvatī came to be regarded as Speech Incarnate or as the presiding deity of knowledge and learning or as a deity dispensing knowledge and intellect, as a result of her identification with Vāk (i. e. Speech, the Word, the Vedas)[44]. It was Vāk first and not Sarasvatī who is believed to be the root of origin of the knowledge contained in the Vedas[45]. It was Vāk who was seen first of all by the seers by the side of sacrifice[46]. For her identification with Vāk, Sarasvatī later on came to be regarded as the abode of all sciences, the mother of the Vedas, etc. and such characteristics are first met with in Vedic literature as being possesed by Vāk. For example, in the ŚBr. we read:

(i) *Sa yathā sarvāsām apām samundra ekayānam /*
...evam sarvāsām vidyānām vāg ekayānam // (14,5,4,11)

(As that ocean is the only place of resort of all waters, similarly Vāk is the only abode of all the sciences).

(ii) *Etad vai sahasram vācaḥ prajātam yad eṣa trayo vedāḥ.../* (5, 5, 5, 12)

(That triple Veda is the thousandfold progeny of Vāk).

'Vāk is mother of the Vedas'—*vedānām mātā*.[47] After the identification '*bekurā*' the synonym of Vāk was borne by Sarasvatī also.[48]

The *mantralakṣṇā* Vāk also is spoken of as one of a transcendent character when it is said about her : 'All gods and the Gandharvas, cattle and men owe their livelihood to her (Vāk).[49] She is one of the six self-born deities (*syambhu-devatā*).[50] Such a degree of height for Vāk was but natural in the context of liturgical firmament. Here we may say that the *Aparā* Vāk is

also glorified and spoken of as *Parā* Vāk. Such an apogee is never attained by Sarasvatī in the Brāhmaṇas. But such passages are not wanting in the Brāhmaṇas as could speak of the *Mantra-lakṣṇā* Vāk (i. e. *Aparā* Vāk) as subordinate to Sarasvatī. In Taitt. S.[51] we read : '*Sarasvatīm Vāk gacchati*'. By the benison of Sarasvatī, Vāk is to be nurtured.[52] Sarasvatī exercises a hold on Vāk.[53] Manas (Mind) and Vāk are said to be the two Sārasvata-*utsas* (i. e., the fountains of Sarasvatī.)[54]

When once the identification was effected,then the offerings made to Sarasvatī were but to delight Vāk.[55] One of the two libations, for the choosing of priests in the Soma-sacrifice, is offered with the call 'Hail to Sarasvatī' and thereby Vāk is said to have been released who in turn supports the sacrifice. In the text of the *mantra* which is as follows :

Juṣṭo Vāco bhūyāsaṁ juṣṭo Vacaspataye Devi Vāk /
Yad vāco madhumat tasmin mā dhāḥ svāhā Sarasvatyaī //

(Acceptable to Speech may I become, acceptable to the lord of Speech; O Divine Speech, what of thy speech is sweetest, in that may he today place us. Hail to Sarasvatī)[56]; the goddess Vāk is addressed here but the actual offering is made with the call '*Svāhā Sarasvatyai*'. That is, by and by Sarasvatī and the goddess Vāk were thought as not different from each other, rather each of the two could represent the notion of either divinity. And thus in the *mantra* :

Anu mām Indro anu mām Prajāpati -
ranu Somo anu Vāgdevyāvīt / (Ait. Ār. 5, 1. 1),

one may think without any reservation with Sāyaṇa that 'Sarasvatī' is intended here by the word Vāgdevī', who is solicited here along with other godheads to protect the worshipper.[57] In the Saṁhitopaniṣad Br. (4) 'Sarasvatī' is said as a kind of gift (*dāna*) which delivers a man from (the limbo of)abyss. Here '*Sarasvatī-lakṣaṇā-dāna*-stands for 'the imparting of education'. Again in the Jai. Br.,[58] it is said that Prākṣa-Prāsravaṇa (the famous source of the river-goddess Sarasvatī) is the highest end of Vāk. Here Sarasvatī is meant by the word Vāk. Simillarly, the sprinkling of a being with the waters of the river-goddess Sarasvatī symbolically signified that the sprinkling with Vāk had been done.[59]

When Sarasvatī became Vāgdevī, she was supposed to exercise full control on the faculty of speech. We are told in

the Ait. Br.[60] that by a triplet to Sarasvatī, the Hotā can deprive a sacrificer (the defaulter or jocularly we may say the one who does not give a sacrificial fee to the priest according to the wishes of the latter) of his speech. Sarasvatī's worship thus could effect a magic spell also.

The identification of Sarasvatī with Vāk the tongue was also effected in the Brāhmaṇas.[61] It was quite natural that when Sarasvatī came to be identified with Vāk, she was also regarded as exercising influence on the vocal region tongue, speech, and mind. She was, therefore, propitiated for the sin committed by a person for uttering a false speech (*anṛta*).[62] But uptil now, Sarasvatī did not enjoy exclusively this privilege of being propitiated for the sin of telling a lie.[63] However, it was Sarasvatī who infused speech into the beings created by Prajāpati.[64]

The identification of Sarasvatī with tongue as an organ of uttering articulate sound was, of course, not unnatural but it is difficult to account for its identification with tongue, the organ of tasting food-which we come across in the Śāṅ. Br.[65] However, we suggest here that such an identification (i. e., the indentification of Sarasvatī with Vāk, the tongue, an organ of tasting food) came to be effected by the '*Deva-Mānuṣa* doctrine' by virtue of which we may say that *Mānuṣa* (man) imitates the *Deva*[66]. Vāk is of two kinds-*Daivī* (the divine one) and *Mānuṣī* (pertaining to man)[67]. Sāyaṇa explains : it is divine when it is *Vaidikī* (i. e., in the form of eulogies of gods) and it is human when it performs the act of tasting and uttering. Now we may say that when the identification of Sarasvatī came to be effected with *Daivī Vāk*, this (identification) was also extended to the *Mānuṣī Vāk* tongue, an organ of tasting food.

1. See under Vāk in Brāhmaṇa-Uddhāra Kcṣa, op. cit.
2. Jai. Br. 2, 242; 252. 3. Ait. Br. 25, passim. 4 2, 396.
5. Kāṇva S. 42, 1; Kāṭhaka S. 12, 5; 27, 1; Kau. Br. 12, 5, 14.
6. ŚBr. 14, 6, 10, 5-6. 7. Jai. Br. 2, 57. 8. Ibid., 2, 252.
9. Ibid., 2, 244. 10. ŚBr. 7, 5, 2, 5.
11. All the *Prāṇas* are stationed in Vāk : ŚBr. 12, 8, 2, 25. She is coupled with the *Prāṇā*-Jai. Br. 1, 306; ŚBr. 1, 4, 1, 2. She is the mother and *Prāṇa*, the son : Ait. Ār. 3, 1, 6.
12. Mait. S. 3, 2, 8. 13. Jai. Br. 2, 392; 422; 3, 294; Tāṇḍya Br. 4, 3, 3; Ait. Br. 25, passim. 14. Jai. Br. 1, 82; 202; 2, 78; 3, 307.
15. Ibid., 2, 78. 16. Taitt. Br. 3, 10, 8, 4; Śāṅ. Ār. 11, 6.
17. Mait. S. 3, 2, 10; Jai. Br. 3, 67; ŚBr. 3, 5, 1, 34.

18. Taitt. Br. 2, 8, 8, 5. 19. Taitt. S. 5, 3, 3, 5. 20. Ait. Ār. 1, 3, 2.
21. *Vāg vai devānām purānnam āsa* : Taitt. Br. 1,3, 5. 22. *Tāṇḍya* Br. 10, 3, 13.
23. Taitt. S. 2, 4, 6, 2. 24. See. e. g., Ait. Br. 5; 15, 25; Jai. S. 6, 1, 6; ŚBr. 3, 5, 1, 2–7.
25. Taitt. S. 2, 1, 2, 6 etc. Mait. S. 1, 10, 5 etc. Kap. S. 8, 45, 2 etc. Kāṭha. S. 23, 2, etc. Kau. Br. 5, 2, etc. Go. Br. 2, 1, 20; Jai. Br. 1, 70 etc. ŚBr. 7, 5, 1, 31 etc. Ait. Br. 2, 24 etc. Taitt. Ār. 4, 5, 1 etc.
26. Cf Sāyaṇa's comm. on Tāṇḍya Br. 6, 7, 7 : explaining, '*Vāg vai Sarasvatī*' he says-'*Mantragatayor vāksararsvatīśabdayor aikyartham āha*'.
27. Also see Taitt. Ār. 15, 1.
28. Cf. Sāyaṇa's comm. on this text.
29. *Daivī vāk* and *mānuṣī vāk*—the two forms of Vāk would have been spoken of in current idiom in the Āraṇyakas, is ascertained from the Ait. Ār. 1, 3, 1. Also see Sāyaṇa's comm. on it.
30. Jai. Br. 1, 82. But the term '*Vāk Sarasvatī*' can also be taken as used for Vāgdevī Sarasvatī in order to distinguish her from the river-goddess or the river Sarasvatī. Cf. Śāṅ Dh. Sūtra : 116, 30. '*Medhāṁ Kṣāntiṁ Ruciṁ Vāṇīṁ Śraddhāṁ Sarasvatīṁ Dakṣāṁ......tarpayāmi*.
31. As e. g., we have in ŚBr. 5, 4, 5, 2 and Taitt. Br. 1, 8, 1, 1.
32. See. e. g., ŚBr. 2, 5, 1, 11.
33. Taitt. Br. 1, 7, 5, 5......'*Eṣa vā apāṁ pṛṣṭaṁ yat Sarasvatī*'.
34. ŚBr. 5, 3, 4, 3. 35. Ibid., 23. 36. ŚBr. 5, 3, 4, 25.
37. Translation of J. Eggeling. 38. 2, 297.
39. Nāthu Lāla Pāṭhaka : Aitareya Brāhmaṇa kā Eka Adhyayana, p. 52 ff.
40. The author of the Ait Ār. (1, 1,1; 5, 1) finds, perhaps, the constitutional similarity at the root of the identification of Vāk and *Anuṣṭup*. Vāk and *Anuṣṭup* both have four *pādas*—both of them are identified, therefore.
41. Ait. Br. 5, 16; Cf. Tāṇḍya Br. 7, 7, 9. 42. F. D. K. Bosch : The Golden Germ, p. 52. 43. 1, 7, 5, 5.
44. Cf. Ait. Ār. 2, 3, 6; ŚBr. 6, 5, 4, 3; 10, 4, 5, 2.
45. Cf. e. g., Ait Ār. 3, 1, 6; ŚBr. 14, 8, 9, 1.
46. She was sought after by the Ṛṣis who composed the Vedic hymns, as well as by the gods through austerity:-*Tam ṛṣayo mantrakṛto manīṣiṇaḥ / Anvaicchan devās tapsā śrameṇa/* (Taitt. Br. 2, 8, 8, 5). Through Vāk gods saw their way which was unknown to them......ŚBr. 4, 5, 1, 3. Also Cf. Jai. Br. 3, 350.
47. Taitt. Br. 2, 8, 8, 5. 48. Tāṇḍya Br. 1, 3, 1. 49. Taitt. Br. 2,8,8,4.
50. Jai Up. 4, 8, 1, 1. 51. 2, 3, 11, 1. 52. Kāṭhaka S. 5, 1.
53. Taitt. Br. 1, 6, 2, 2. Also Cf. Jai. Br. 2, 130. 54. ŚBr. 7, 5, 1, 31.
55. Śāṅ. Br. 5, 2.
56. Śāṅ. Br. 10, 6; Go. Br. 2, 2, 17; Jai. Br. 1, 82; Mait S. 1, 3, 1.
57. Also see Taitt. Ār. 2, 12, 1 along with Sāyaṇa's comm. The same idea is met in the text.
58. 2, 298 : *Eṣa u ha vai Vāco snto yat Prākṣaḥ Prāsravaṇaḥ*.
59. See the context of Abhiṣeka in the Rājasūya and also Mait. S. 2, 1, 7; 2, 3, 5; 4, 3, 9.
60. 3, 3. 61. ŚBr. 12, 9, 1, 14 : *Jihvā Sarasvatī*. 62. Mait. S, 4, 14, 17.
63. Viśvedevāḥ have been also propitiated in this context, Mait.S. 4.14,18.
64. Mait. S. 1,10.5; Taitt. Br. 1,6,1,2; Kap. S. 48, 18; Kāṭhaka S. 35, 20.
65. 12, 8. 66. By this doctrine we mean that a common man is to follow always the example of the leader, the *Deva*. In order to illustrate it, we may refer here to Bṛ. Ār. UP. 6, 4, 2 where we are told that since Prajāpati performed a certain act, therefore, the sacrificer would do the same.
67. Ait. Ār. 1, 3, 1.

CHAPTER V

SARASVATĪ IN THE VEDIC KALPA-SŪTRAS

We get a number of references to the river Sarasvatī and the goddess Sarasvatī in various sacrifices and ceremonies the exegeses of which are given in the Śrauta-Sūtras, Gṛhya-Sūtras and Dharma-Sūtras. But on a very few occasions do we get fresh information which has a bearing on the personality of Sarasvatī. This is so because (i) most of the old rituals are repeated in the Sūtras and (ii) in newly-sprung ceremonies the text of the old Vedic *mantras* is almost invariably quoted. See, for example, in the Śāṅ. ŚS[1] the old *mantra-juṣṭo vāco bhūyāsm*, etc. is applied in the new ceremonies like *Aikādaśini* and *Savanīya-paśu*. Again in the Initiatory ceremony (*Anvārambhaṇīyā Iṣṭi*) the invocative and oblational verses for the *havis* are quoted from the ṚV.[3] Thus it will be a sheer repetition if we record here that Sarasvatī continued to appear among the deities in sacrificial ceremonies like the *Sautrāmaṇī*, the *Rājasūya*, the *Daśapeya*[4], the *Darśapūrṇamāsa*[5], etc.

Sarasvatī continues to appear with Sarasvat and offerings are made side by side to both of them, in the ceremonies contained in the Śrauta Sūtras.[6]

There is a discussion in the Śāṅ. ŚS[7]. with regard to number and kinds of oblations in the sacrifice connected with consecration in the context of Soma sacrifices (when the high altar is built of bricks). According to one school of thought[8] here, the fourth and fifth oblations are destined for Aditi and Sarasvatī apart from the usual three *iṣṭis*, one to Agni and Viṣṇu, one to Agni-Vaiśvānara and one to the Ādityas. From it, we get a cue that a school had a preference for the oblations to Sarasvatī over and above the usual tradition. It speaks of the popularity which Sarasvatī would have enjoyed amongst a certain section of the people.

The food prepared from rice seems to have become popular for the offerings to Sarasvatī. Grains of rice (*vrīhi*), fried grains of rice (*parivāpa*) and wetted and parched after wetting grains of rice (*lājā*) were prepared for Sarasvatī[9].

Amongst the days sacred to Sarasvatī, we may count the full and new moon days when the *Anvārambhaṇīyā iṣṭi* is performed[10]; or when the *havis* are offered in the *Iḍā-dadha* ceremony.[11]

and the seventh day of the bright forthnight when the initiation (*dīkṣa*) is done at Vinaśana.[12] Another text prescribes the sixth day (of bright fortnight in this case).[13]

The institution of *Yātra* of the river seems to be becoming popular in the Śrauta Sūtras because the *Sārasvata satras* similar to those in the Brāhmaṇas are performed at different points on the river, mostly at Vinaśana, at the confluence of Sarasvatī and Dṛṣadvatī and at Plakṣa-Prasravaṇa.[11]

The banks of the river Sarasvatī are considered sacred for the performance of various ceremoies[15] and its waters are used in the sacrificial ceremoies in the Śrauta-sūtras[16] but in the Gṛhya Sūtras the river seems to be losing popularity which is gained by the Gaṅgā[17]. However, in the *Snāna-vidhi*, the Sarasvatī and the Gaṅgā in conjunction with Gayā, Naimiṣa and Puṣkara are to be remembered being sacred *tīrthas* before taking a bath.[13]

The Hiraṇya-keśi ŚS.[19] appends the term Bhāratī to Sarasvatī[20] It shows that Sarasvatī and Bhāratī would have been considered synonymous terms which in turn paved the way in later literature to take Bhāratī as a regular name of Sarasvatī, learning incarnate or the goddess of learning.

In the Dharmasūtras, the goddess Sarasvatī is offered sacrificial water along with other deities, such as Keśava, Mādhava, Nārāyaṇa, Govinda, Viṣṇu, etc. and deified entities such as Tuṣṭi, Puṣṭi, Medhā, Kṣānti, Ruci, Śraddhā etc.[21] In the Vārāha-Dharma-sūtra[22], Sarasvatī is a synonym for knowledge and in the Viṣṇu–Dharma-sūtra[23], Sarasvatī is an epithet of the goddess Śrī.

In the Gṛhyasūtras Sarasvatī is worshipped in a few ceremonies. The text of the *mantras* applied in the ceremonies is not important because mostly the Vedic *mantras* are repeated here; however, the context in which the *mantras* are applied is quite significant.

Sarasvatī being Vāgdevī seems to be making its way to find a place in the rituals relating to education. In the *Upanayana*, the *Saṁskāra* which stands at the head of all the rituals relating to education[24], the worship of the god Savitṛ is enjoined invariably.[25] But the text of Vai. GS.[26] shows that Sarasvatī, too, is to be worshipped after the adoration of Gaṇeśa and Savitṛ. When at the time of hoiding the right hand including the thumb

of the student with his right hand, the teacher remembers a number of deities with a stock-type formula, Sarasvatī is one of these deities[27]. An invocation to Sarasvatī, along with Indra and the Aśvins for bestowing sharp intellect is whispered near the face of the student by the teacher[28]. The above prayer is repeated again when the *upanīta*(the student after investiture) undergoes a *vrata* for three days[29]. *Mekhalā* (a girdle) was a part of the uniform of a Brahmacārī.[30] At the time of tying it on the waist, it is addressed as 'the divine (*devī*) protectress (*goptrī*) Sarasvatī, who is the knower of undivided inheritance (*avibhāgajñe*) and is asked to bless the student with sharp intellect.

At the time of the *vidyārambha* (the starting of teaching), which forms an integral part of the *Upanayana* ceremony, the goddess Sarasvatī and the god Sarasvat are to be worshipped[31]. A *Sārasvata-homa* is prescribed as an expiation if one breaks the vow of celibacy during the *Upanayana*.[32]

In the marriage cermony at the time when the foot of the groom is placed on a stone-slab[33] and again in the context of *Sapta-padī*[34], *mantras* in adoration of the goddess Sarasvatī are read because the bride is equated here with the goddess Sarasvatī. The Sūtras prescribe that a groom should sing a praise of women on this occasion. The text of one of the *mantras* here is given as it represents an ideal of highest order, viz., the reverence which was paid by the people of the past in India to their womenfolk :

Sarasvati predam ava subhage vāinīvati|
Yāṁ tvā viśvasya bhūtasya pragāyaṁ asy-agrataḥ||
Tām-adya gāthāṁ gāsyami yā strīṇā n-uttamayaśaḥ|

-Āgni GS. 1, 5, 3.

(O Sarasvatī, of good luck, rich in food and vigour, whom I celebrate in the face of this universe, protect this solemn rite. O thou in whom the elements were produced, in whom this universe was framed, I will sing that hymn (the nuptial text) which constitutes the highest glory of women).

Hiraṇyakeśi GS.[35] prescribes that before cohabiting on the fourth night (the previous three nights being a period of monthly courses), the husband calls (the wife) who has taken a bath, and is wearing tidy dress and then mutters the three *mantras*[36]. In one of these *mantras* Sarasvatī is prayed to bestow conception (on the wife of the worshipper). The possession of male children

was a cherished desire for which the Aryans being a marshal race[38] had been pining since the very beginning of their career of seeking their fortune in new lands. It is evident from a number of Ṛgvedic prayers. The Vai. GS enjoins a prayer[39]- 'Sarasvatī, promote this (our undertaking) etc.', in honour of Sarasvatī for obtaining male children.

The only significant reference with regard to the relations of Sarasvatī with other gods is that she has come near to Viṣṇu in the *Sūtras*. In the Baudhāyana DS., we have already seen that she is offered sacrificial water with Viṣṇu in his various forms such as Keśava, Mādhava, Govinda, etc.[40] In the Gṛhya-sūtras also, the *tarpaṇa* is made to her along with the other female members of the council of the Vaiṣṇava deities (*Viṣṇu-pāraṣadī-s*), to wit, *Śrī-devī* and *Puṣṭi*.[41]

In the context of lighting the sacrificial fire, may it be in the *Brahma*[17]*-yajña*, the *Gṛhya*[43]*-karmas*, the *Upanayana*[44], *Vivāha*[45] or *Aṣṭaka-śrādha*[42], the permission of the goddess Sarasvatī preceded invariably by Aditi and Anumati is sought[47] and a '*jalāñjali*' is offered on the north side of the fire to Sarasvatī, which is to the south in the case of Aditi and to the west in the case of Anumati. The only probable reason, for assigning north as the quarter to Sarasvatī, seems that the abode of the goddess was thought to be in the north. At Vinaśana[48] also we have seen that the oblations were offered by the worshipper while standing on its south bank, i. e., facing towards the north. In addition to it, Knowledge-Vāgdevī/Sarasvatī seems to have been thought as stationed in the north and a student desirous of attaining knowledge had to go to the north to obtain his desideratum.[49] It alludes to the fact that north had been the nucleus of knowledge and learning. The post-Vedic conception of taking Sarasvatī as stationed in Kāśmīra (Cf. her epithet *Kāśmīra-pura-vāsinī*-SRUp.) also refers to the same fact.

The daily worship of Sarasvatī is enjoined as a part of the evening prayers (*sandhyopāsanam*). The goddess Sarasvatī is mentioned here along with Gāyatrī and Sāvitrī who are worshipped in the morning and at noon, respectively. Sarasvatī forms a triad with these two goddesses in the Purāṇas also but it(triad) became very popular with the authors of a few later minor Upaniṣads. Gāyatrī is the first member of the triad, Sāvitrī,

1. 6, 9, 17 (=MS. 1, 3, 1; Taitt. S. 3, 1, 10. 1; Kau. Br. 10, 6 etc.)
2. Śāṅ. ŚS. 2, 4, 2. 3. 1, 3. 10; 7, 95. 5; 96, 6. 4 See e. g., Śāṅ. ŚS. 15, 5; 15, 14 etc. 5. Kātya. ŚS. 3, 7, 15—Sarasvtī is offered an oblation. Āp. ŚS. 5, 3. 5.
6. Āp. ŚS. 5. 23. 5; Ā. ŚS. 2. 8, 3; Vā ŚS. 1, 4, 4, 43; 3, 3, 1, 4; Mā. ŚS. 1, 15, 6, 19; Bhā. ŚS. 5, 15, 10 etc.
7. 9. 24, 1-5. 8. Ś.Br. 6, 6, 1, 2. 9. Vai. ŚS. 11, 1, 7; Hi. ŚS. 8, 1, 50.
10. Śāṅ. ŚS. 2, 4, 1. 11. Ibid., 3, 9, 2; 3; 5; 6. 12. Kā ŚS. 24, 5, 30.
13. Lāṭ. ŚS. 10, 15, 1. 14. Śāṅ. ŚS. 13, 29, 15; Lāṭ. ŚS 10.15, ; 10, 71, 1 15. See e. g., Hi ŚS. 17. 8. 8; Lāṭ ŚS 10, 15 1; 10, 71, 1. 16. Hi. ŚS. 13, 15, 11; 16, 6, 41: Āp. ŚS. 18, 13, 1. 17. Vai. GS. 1, 5. 18. AVP. 42, 2, 4—

Sarasvatīm Gayām Gaṅgām Naimiṣam Puṣkarāṇi ca /
Smṛtvā tīrthāni Puṇyānī avagāhej jalaṁ tataḥ //

19. 8, 1, 50. 20. Cf. Ait. Br. 2, 24. 21. Baudha. DS. 2, 9, 19; Śāṅ. DS. 116, 30 22, 19. 23. 99, 4. 24. The *Upanayana* signifies 'the admission of a person to Vedic studies'. The connotation of the work *Upanaya* is that an *ācārya* (teacher) accepts a boy as his pupil-Dr. Ram Gopal : India of the Vedic Kalpasūtras, p. 291.
25. Cf. Hir. GS. 15. 2; '*Brahmacārī bhavāni devena Savitrā prasūtaḥ*'. Āp. DS. 1, 1, 1, 9–10 : The *Sāvitrī* (i. e the famous *Gāyatrī*-a prayer to Savitṛ in *Gāyatrī* metre) is learnt for (the study of) all the Vedas. 26. 2, 6.
27. Agni GS. 1, 1, 3: *Sarasvatī te hastam agrahīt*, These words are repeated after prefixing the name of each deity one by one. 28. Ibid.
29. Ibid., 1, 1, 4. 30. For details see Ram Gopal, op. cit., p. 294.
31. Vā. GS. 7, 6; 7. 32 Āgni. GS. 2, 7, 4. 33. Vā. GS. 14, 29.
34. Ibid., 15, 19. 35. 1,25,1. 36. ṚV 10, 184, 1-3. 37 These *mantras*, according to Ātreya, ought to be repeated whenever they cohabit, Hi. GS 1, 25, 3. But Bādarāyaṇa says that they are muttered only the first time and after her monthly courses...ibid, 4.
38. The reason of this concept has changed with the changing times. Now the male childern are desired because they are assets to the parents in contrast to the female ones who are a liability.
39. 3, 3; the Sūtra text prescribes that the *mantras* of the prayer are to be read when husband faces the west, and wife the east or when he faces the east, she the west. 40 See supra p. 122. 41. Āgni. GS. 2, 6, 3. 42. Āp. ŚS 19, 20, 6: Go GS. 1, 3, 1; Āp. GS 1, 2, 3 etc.
43. Drā. GS. 1, 2, 18. 44. Āgni. GS. 1, 1, 1; 1, 1, 3. 45. Ibid., 1,1,4; 1, 5, 1;1.6,1.46. Ibid., 3. 2, 1. 47. This stock prayer is first seen in the Tait. S. 2, 3, 1, 2; Mait. S: 2, 2. 1; 15, 6. 48. Lāṭ ŚS. 10. 15. 1. 49. Kau. Br. 7. 6 : '*Udañca u eva yanti vācaṁ śikṣitum......*' 50. Āgni GS 2; 6, 8 (=Taitt. Br., 5, 8, 6)

Etymological Study of the word 'Sarasvatī'*

Sarasvatī is derived from *root sṛ*, 'to go' on the basis of Pāṇinian grammar[1]. √*Sṛ* can be traced back to √*svṛ*, giving a complex of meanings in the Vedic literature. In the course of our study, we have come across the word Sarasvatī conveying two fundamental meanings : (i) a river, which is also conceived as goddess; (ii) speech, and also the goddess of speech, a goddess dispensing speech /learning, etc.

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In the YV 8, 43 *Sarasvatī* also means 'a cow'. When *Sarasvatī* means a river, *saras* may be derived from √*sṛ*, 'to go'. Ācārya Viśva Bandhu's suggestion that √*sṛ*, is probably a developed form of the root *'*kṣar*','*prakṣaraṇe*', **dravībhave* does not seem to be convincing for the reason that the water of the river which flows (or goes on) cannot be said as 'melting', 'assuming a liquid form'. To take √*sṛ*, 'to go' in Sarasvatī is as natural as to take √*gam*, 'to go' in 'Gaṅgā', the name of another river. Though √*sṛ* (Nigh. *sisarti* 2, 14) expressing the notion of 'motion' is quite conspicuous by its presence in the ṚV in words like *saṁsāra*, 'world' *sarit*, 'river', *salila*, 'water', *Saraṇyu*, name of a river, *Sarayu*, 'name of a river and *Saramā*, 'the messenger of the *devas*', yet, if at all it is to be traced back, it should be traced to √*svṛ*, 'to go' (Nigh. 2, 14)[3].

We further suggest that when *Sarasvatī* means 'speech', it should not be derived from √*sṛ*, 'to go'[4] because the fundamental function of speech is not 'motion', 'to go', etc. but, in fact, the notion of 'sound' and 'utterance' is the main function of speech. Hence the word '*saras* meaning *vāk*, 'sound' should be derived from √*sṛ*<*svṛ*, *śabde* 'to utter', 'to sound'. In many pessages of the ṚV root *svṛ*, 'to utter', has been used[5]. The root '*svṛ*' also means 'to praise' in the ṚV[6]. *Saras* being derived from √*sṛ*< √*svṛ* will thus mean 'utterance', 'sound', or 'praise'. '*Sarasvatī*' would, therefore, mean 'possessed of, i. e., containing utterance or sound', i. e. 'speech', '*vāk*', '*vāṇī*. When it will be the name of the goddess, it would mean 'one possessed of praise' i.e., 'to whom eulogy is addressed'.

It is further suggested that when '*Sarasvatī*' would mean 'a cow', it may be derived from √*sṛ*< √*svṛ*, 'to shine.' *Saras* will thus mean 'lustre' and *Sarasvatī*', 'the one possessed of lustre'. It is in fact the meaning which is to be understood in the YV passage quoted above (i. e., 8, 43).

While etymologizing the word *Sarasvatī*, *saras* has been taken as giving the meaning of *saraṇam* by ancient scholiasts[3] and modern writers[9]. It is absolutely wrong. *Suras*, from √*sṛ* plus *asun*>*as* (the suffix) is nominative or active in nature (*kartari as pratyaye*......Bhānujī Dīkṣita). *Saras*, therefore, like many other words of its class[9] does not contain the sense of the word *saraṇam* constructed with the suffix *lyuṭ* (*bhāvavace*) added to the same root *sṛ*. Thus Sāyaṇa is wrong when he equates *saras* with *saraṇam* in his words *Sarasvatī Saraṇavatī* etc. *Saras* is in reality *saraṇaśīla*, having the nature of *saraṇa* and is not *saraṇa*. Similarly Mahīdhara is also wrong when he says *sarah śabda-pravāhaḥ* because in fact *saras* is *śabda*, sound, and not *the flowing of sound*. Summarizing we shall say :

(i) *Sarasvatī*, meaning 'river' is to be derived from root *sṛ* < √*svṛ*, 'to utter', 'to sound'. Its fundamental meanings would be then 'one possessed of sound or utterance'.

(ii) *Sarasvatī* meaning 'speech' is to be derived from root *sṛ*<*svṛ*, 'to utter', 'to sound'. Its fundamental meanings would be then 'one possessed of sound or utterance'.

(iii) *Sarasvatī* meaning 'a goddess' is to be derived from root *sṛ*<root *svṛ* 'to praise'. Its fundamental meaning would be then 'one possessed of praise i. e., who has been praised'.

(iv) *Sarasvatī* meaning 'a cow' is to be derived from root *sṛ*< root *svṛ*, 'to shine'. Its fundamental meaning would be then 'one possessed of lustre'.

(It is only once that we come across a reference in which this word is spelt as *Sarasvati* in *Sarasvati-kṛtasya* etc....YV 20, 35. Accounting for the short vowel '*i*' instead of long vowel '*ī*' Mahīdhara quotes Panini 6, 3, 63 : *ṅyāpoḥ saṁjñācchandasor bahulam* i.e., it is a Vedic peculiarity that *ī* i.e., *ṅīp* is sometimes changed into *i*).

Dr. Surya Kanta has suggested in his paper 'Saras, Soma and Sīra[10] that *Saras* in *Sarasvatī* is Soma and not water. He further identifies *Sarasvatī* with *Aṁśumatī* banking upon the information contained in the Soma legend (ṚV 8, 96, 13-15) and the Bṛhaddevatā (6, 109-114). *Āṁśu* is unmistakably Soma in the ṚV, *saras* is, therefore, Soma and is to be derived from the root *sṛ* expressing the notion of motion. Thus *Sarasvatī* according to the savant means'rich in *soma*'and not 'rich in waters'. Dr. Surya Kanta has given no reference in his paper in which *saras* and *soma* tend to be identical to each other. In a few passages of the ṚV *saras* means the vessel containing Soma[11]. Judging it on the principles of semantics, we may say that *saras* would have also meant *soma* at one time and its meaning was extended afterwards to the vessel containg *soma*.[12] Explaining ṚV 7,103,7, Veṅkaṭamādhava writes : *Saraḥ śabdaḥ soma vacanaḥ*. In order to confirm the view-point of Dr. Surya Kanta, it may also be added that lexicons give *soma-latā* as one of the meanings of the word *Sarasvatī*[13] which also suggests that *saras* and *soma* must have been identical terms. But it is submitted here that the meaning of *saras* as *soma* where Sarasvatī stands for speech may be quite tenable because Soma is an impeller of speech etc.[11] but when it means 'the river' *saras* should preferrably mean 'water'[15]. In the other Vedic names of rivers like Āpagā or Āpayā and Sadānīrā, one component of the word does mean 'water'. It is, therefore, not incorrect to take *saras* to mean 'water' in the word *Sarasvatī* the river.

Sarasvatī has been translated by Keith and Macdonell[16] as 'one abounding in pools' i. e., *sarāṁsi santy-asyām*. But it is incorrect to say that since Sarasvatī particularly forms pools while flowing, therefore it is called *Saras-vatī*. Though the word *saras* meaning pond does occur in the ṚV[17], this meaning of *saras* is not intended in the word *Sarasvatī*. It is because the formation of pools and lakes is a general characteristic of a river when it flows in the second stage, i. e., in the plains having traversed the hilly paths. Such ponds are in reality the 'ox-bow-lakes'which are formed by perennial rivers in their attempt

to straighten (i. e., change) their path (which is peculiarly zigzag in the plains) by way of erosion[18]. Sarasvatī, too, may have formed such pools in antiquity. But such pools or lakes as are mentioned in the account of *Pratiloma Yātra* (sojourn from the mouth to source) of Sarasvatī seem to have been formed when the Sarasvatī lost its perennial character and flowed only for a few months in the rainy season[19]. That is, such a characteristic of forming pools is very late in the history of the course of this pre-historic river, therefore, we cannot justify that *saars-vatī* 'abounding in pools' would have been the original sense of the name of the river. The word *Sarasvatī* should rather be explained as *sarāṁsi meghodakāni yasyāḥ*, one who contains the waters of the clouds'. This explanation of ours is in apposition to its Ṛgvedic epithets *sindhu-mātā*.[20] and *sindhubhiḥ pinvamānā*.[21]

1. Cf. Bhānuji Dīkṣita, the commentator of Amarakoṣa who explains the word: *Sarati gaccati vahati yat tat saraḥ jalaṁ kartari as pratyaye kṛte saras śabdo jalārthe kospi dṛśyate/tadā tu Sarasvān ity-asya jala-vān ityarthāt jalavatī nadī ity-arthospi saṁgacchate eva tadā tu yogārūḍham idaṁ padaṁ bodhyam*, i. e. root *Sṛ+asun> as=saras* (from *sarvadhātubhyossun*, Uṇādi, 4, 189). *Saras+matup=Sarasvat, Sarasvat+ṅīp>ī=Sarasvatī*. Scholiasts have also followed Pāṇini. See; e. g., Sāyaṇa's comm on RV , 3, 10; 188, 8; 2, 30, 8; 3, 23, 4; 54, 13; Av. 18, 1, 41 and Mahīdhara's Comm. on YV 10, 5 etc.
2 A Vedic word Concordance, Saṁhitā Section, Part V, p. 3319, note 'n'.
3 Cf. *svaranty-āposvanā parijraya ḥ*.. ṚV, 5, 54, 2; Veṅkaṭamādhava : *svaranti pra-gamayanti*'.
4 Sāyaṇa has erroneously done it : *gadya-padya-rūpeṇa prasaraṇam asyā astīti Sarasvatī*/'...comm. ṚV, 3, 54, 13; again *Sarasvatīm Saraṇavatīm sakala-śabda-svarūpām Vāg-devatām*. Comm. on AV 18, 1, 41. Mahīdhara also says : '*Saraḥ śabda-pravāho yasyāḥ sā Sarasvatī*;'...comm. on YV, 10, 5. Miss Ragozin (Vedic India, p. 269) says the quality of 'flowing' of speech is also witnessed in the English idiom, where we have 'a rich, a free, an easy-flow of words', 'fluency of speech', 'a torrent of eloquence'. But we understand that these English idioms have nothing to do with the etymology of the word because they are more symbolic rather than expressive of the original and inherent quality of speech.
5. See, e. g., 1, 151, 5; 5, 54, 12. 6. See e. g., ṚV 8, 3, 16. 7. See e. g. Sāyaṇa's comm. on ṚV 2, 30, 8; AV 7, 70, 1; 71, 1 and Durga's comm. on Nighaṇṭu 1, 11. 8. Anand Swarup Gupta : 'The word '*saras*' (*saraḥ*, actually means '*saraṇam*' or '*prasaraṇam*' (moving, gliding, flowing etc.)'-Purāṇa, Vol. IV, No. 5, p. 62. 9. *Cetas, payas, sadas, etc.*
10. ABORI Vol. XXXVIII, Part I-II, pp. 115-39, Poona, 1958 (Reprint).
11. 6, 27, 11; 7, 103, 7; 8, 7, 10; 9, 54, 2. 12, Cf. Latin 'potare'-a drink and Icelandish 'pottr' (skt, *pātra* root *pā*) the pot containing a driuk; Students English Dictionary, Charles Annandale, Blackie and Son, p. 547, Similarly, it is very probable that *Saras* would have meant 'pond', 'lake' because it contained *Saras* 'water' the one that flows. *Saras*, meaning 'pool' cannot be directly derived from root *sṛ*, to go', 'to move on', 'flow' because pool is some what a stationary object and the water contained in it is also stagnant and not flowing.
13. See, e.g., the Vācaspatyam, p. 5249 which quotes 'the Śabda-candrikā'
14. VM. p 109, 15. It is in contrast to the words of Dr. Surya Kanta, op cit. p. 115-'But as water is the common constituent of all the rivers it may be pointless to connect this name (Sarasvatī) with water.
16. Ved. Ind. Vol II. p. 12 17. See note 11 above. 18. See Thornbury. op. cit., pp. 137-38; Chapter V, The Fluvial Geomorphic Cycle.
19. Baladeva undertook such a *yātra*, Moh. Śalya Parva; 33-54. 20. See supra p. 49. 21 See supra p. 46.

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